

On-campus voting precinct sees successful debut

More than 1,000 participated in voting at the Convocation Center in Virginia’s presidential primaries Tuesday



ALEXIS MILLER / THE BREEZE

On-campus students were able to vote Tuesday in the Convocation Center for the first time.

By BJORN JOHNSON
The Breeze

After a year of planning and more than \$25,000, a new on-campus voting precinct was opened at the Convocation Center. Over 1,000 voters showed up for the site’s first election: Tuesday’s presidential primaries.

1,076 voters showed up to Convo, the third-highest turnout among all precincts in Harrisonburg.

The new precinct was spearheaded by the efforts of Joshua Humphries, a JMU alumnus who graduated in December with a degree in political science. Humphries noticed the inefficiency of the distance that students had to travel in order to vote. The process involved coordination between Humphries, the JMU administration, Harrisonburg’s Electoral Board and the city council.

The voter total exceeded Humphries’ expectations.

“The biggest overarching issue is that we have a crisis in this country, where millennial engagement is at a very low level,” Humphries said. “And we’re trying our best at JMU through a lot

of different ways to combat that with our engaged university initiatives. Students are an important constituency and it’s important they have their voice heard like everybody else.”

When it was all said and done across the state, Hillary Clinton won the Democratic primary with 64.3 percent of the vote, and Donald Trump won the Republican primary with 34.8 percent of the vote. However, among voters in Harrisonburg, Bernie Sanders won on the Democratic side with 66.1 percent of the vote, while Marco Rubio won among Republicans with 39.5 percent of the vote.

Students registered to vote with an on campus address were eligible to vote at Convo. Quinn Bergeron, a senior accounting major, recognized the simple process involved in his voting experience. He also noticed there was a considerably higher amount of people there than he expected.

“More people should do it,” Bergeron said. “It’s a really important process, which is too easy not to do.”

Rob Alexander, a political science professor, acted as an officer of elections for the voting at

see **PRIMARIES**, page 4

VOTING
BREAKDOWN
IN THE 'BURG

Information from the Virginia Department of Elections

VOTE

TOP THREE PRECINCTS
BY VOTES

1. Keister Elementary School (1,179)
2. Stone Spring Elementary School (1,125)
3. Convocation Center (1,076)

WHO WON HARRISONBURG

Democrat - Bernie Sanders 66.1%
Republican - Marco Rubio 39.5%

WHO WON VIRGINIA

Democrat - Hillary Clinton 64.3%
Republican - Donald Trump 34.8%

KELSEY HARDING / THE BREEZE

A letter from the president

Obama responds to English professor about gun control

By JOANNA McNEILLY
The Breeze

Two days after Alison Parker died from a shooting during a live television interview in August, one professor sat down and wrote a letter to state representatives and President Barack Obama on the issue of gun violence in the U.S.

“I felt totally helpless and thought about what I could do as one person over the issue,” Jay Varner, an English and writing, rhetoric and technical communication professor,

LOREN PROBISH / THE BREEZE

Professor Jay Varner wrote to the president in late August.

said. “And the only thing I know how to do efficiently is how to write and communicate.”

In his letter, Varner expresses his sadness about Parker’s death and the disappointment he feels that nothing has been done to eliminate the amount of shootings in the U.S.

“I had met her earlier this spring,” Varner wrote about Parker in his letter. “It was brief, and now, it seems much too brief, but she made the best of impressions.”

Varner said it was surreal to find out Parker was affected by gun violence, and he used his writing skills to communicate how he felt.

“What are you going to do about this?” Varner asks in his letter. “I hope this means it’s time to fight for sensible, reasonable gun control. I hope this means that you will do all that you can to ensure nothing like this happens again.”

After sending the letter, Varner wasn’t sure about the type of responses he was going to get and from whom.

“I didn’t know what would happen; I guess it was sort of a moment of waiting to see what happened,” Varner said. “And not only what their responses would be, but hopefully what their actions would be.”

On Feb. 3 he received a voicemail from a phone number with a Washington, D.C., area code.

“Your letter,” said the recording, “was one of the 10 that the president reads each night,” the woman on the other line said. “He read it last fall and has saved it since then.”

It was a message from the White House, calling to confirm Varner’s home address because the president was sending him a reply.

When Varner got the handwritten letter from Obama in the mail, he reflected on it with mixed feelings.

see **LETTER**, page 9

Answering the call

Local groups discuss sexual assault response

COLLINS CENTER PHONE
540.434.2272
JMU CARE 24/7 HELPLINE
540.568.6411

30%
OF SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE COMMITTED BY
AN ACQUAINTANCE OF THE VICTIM

1 IN 4!
ASSAULTS TAKE PLACE IN THE
VICTIM'S HOME

1 RAPED
ATTEMPT OCCURS EVERY
5 MINUTES

INFORMATION FROM THECOLLINSCENTER.ORG

KELSEY HARDING / THE BREEZE

By BROOKE BLANEY
The Breeze

Sexual assault at JMU and many other universities has been a prevalent problem for many years. When these incidents occur in Harrisonburg, correspondents at the Collins Center, which is located downtown, and the Harrisonburg Police Department are among the groups that respond to them.

“Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes,” Rhoda Miller, the crisis response coordinator at the Collins Center, said. “We often meet with victims many years after.”

see **RESPONSE**, page 4

Another tussle with the Tribe

JMU gears up for tournament rematch with William & Mary

By JAKE BROD, PETER CAGNO AND KEVIN ROMM
The Breeze

JMU men’s basketball concluded its 2015-16 regular season with an overall record of 21-10, an 11-7 record in Colonial Athletic Association play. The Dukes will now shift their focus to the CAA tournament, where they’ll have a rematch against the College of William & Mary (19-10, 11-7 CAA) in a quarterfinal game on Saturday in Baltimore, Maryland.

JMU finished its regular season this past Saturday with a 71-65 victory over William & Mary. This season, the Dukes and Tribe have split their two games, each winning on their respective home courts. This matchup

will be played in neutral territory.

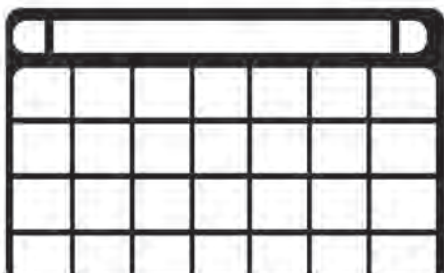
“We have to fight some adversity on a neutral court because we’re not going to have the raucous crowd we had last time,” head coach Matt Brady said. “William & Mary is not going away and I fully expect this game to go right down to the wire.”

Last season, the Dukes hosted Hofstra University in the regular season finale and prevailed with an 82-73 win to finish the campaign. The Dukes and Pride met in the quarterfinals of the CAA tournament just a week later, with Hofstra getting revenge and escaping with a 74-57 triumph. Brady, along with some of his players, have pinpointed what needs to be done to make sure

see **CAA**, page 10

DANIEL STEIN / THE BREEZE

Sophomore guard Joey McLean attacks the rim against William & Mary last Saturday.



The Breeze

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Event Calendar

Saturday, March 5

- Free Brew Tour @ Brothers Craft Brewing, 12:15-2 p.m.
- Magic Three House: Space Mission and Sunstruck @ John C. Wells Planetarium, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., 2:15-3:30 p.m.
- JMU baseball game vs. UMBC @ Veterans Memorial Park, 2 p.m.

Sunday, March 6

- Sunday Brunch @ Jimmy Madison's Southern Kitchen & Whisky Bar, 10 a.m.
- JMU baseball game vs. UMBC @ Veterans Memorial Park, 1 p.m.
- Overlake (Shoegaze)/ Julia Pox/Sleepwalker @ The Golden Pony, 18 +, \$5, 9 p.m.

Monday, March 7

- Spring Break: Classes do not meet from March 7-March 11
- Maria Magdalena Compos-Pons, Encore Artist @ Duke Hall Gallery, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. until April 6
- Ruckzuck/Jaguardini/ Sailing Club @ The Golden Pony, 18 +, \$5, 9 p.m.

Thursday, March 3

- Ask a Nurse @ Carrier Library, 2-4 p.m.
- Mirrors and Windows: Poetry as a Means of Reflection and Engagement @ Festival Conference, room 5, 8 a.m. to 10:15 p.m.
- JMU Bach Aria Ensemble @ Recital Hall, Forbes Center, regular \$10, students \$5, 8 p.m.

Friday, March 4

- Seminar: Patterns in a leaf @ Bioscience, room 2007, 3 p.m.
- JMU baseball game vs. UMBC @ Veterans Memorial Park, 3 p.m.
- Mike Davis live and Mashita food truck @ Brothers Craft Brewing, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 8

- International Women's Day @ Ten Thousand Villages, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Great Smokey/Zooanzo/Charlie/ Tomato Face @ The Golden Pony, 18 +, \$5, 9 p.m.
- Team Trivia @ Clementine, teams of six or less, 9 p.m.

Wednesday, March 9

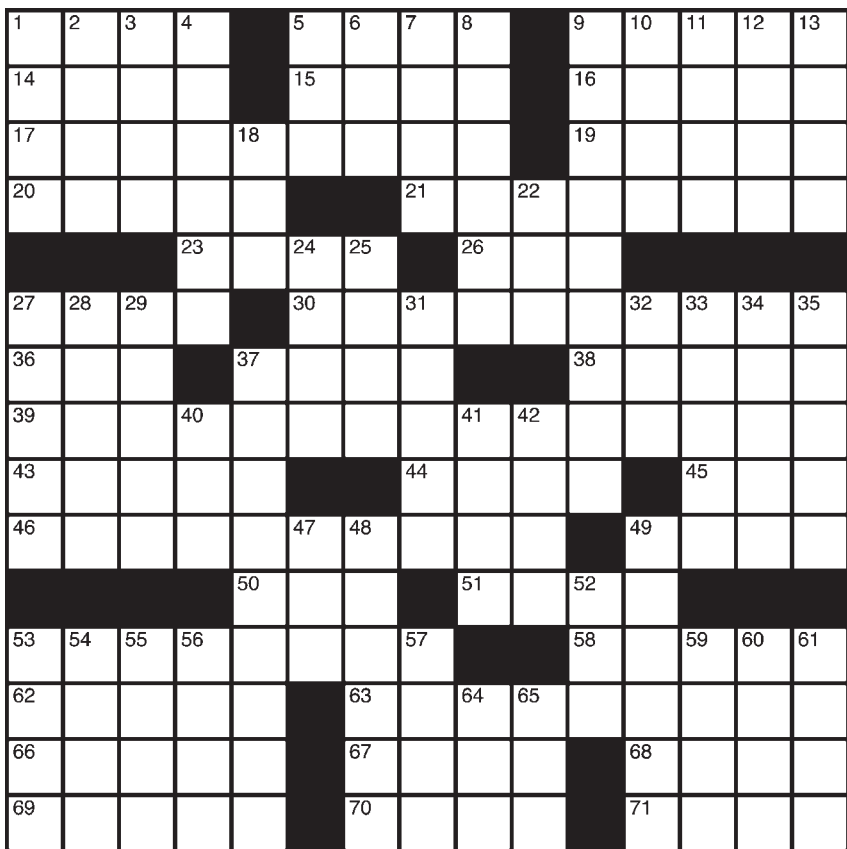
- African Drumming Class @ 17 E Johnson St, 1-3 p.m.
- Wilton Wednesday @ The Joshua Wilton House, 4-9 p.m.
- Meditation Through the Seasons: Inner & Outer Change @ The Center Yoga, \$48 for four weeks, 7:15-8:15 p.m.

CARTOON: HAVING A SENIOR MOMENT

The light at the end of the tunnel...

Here we come, spring break!

KELSEY HARDING / THE BREEZE



By Mel Rosen

3/3/16

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

Across

- 1 Congressional authority
- 5 Lifeless
- 9 Repaired, as a boot
- 14 Warning to a tot
- 15 Academic apparel
- 16 Dancer Fred's dancing sister
- 17 Temporarily out of stock, with "on"
- 19 Add a lane to, say
- 20 Hot rod rods
- 21 Not stable, in a way
- 23 Sighed line
- 26 Wall St. event
- 27 "Yeah, sure!"
- 30 One might spoil a dream
- 36 Beth, to Jo
- 37 Hindu "sir"
- 38 Spot in a spa
- 39 Jangle pop and the like, and a hint to a hidden feature of 17-, 30-, 46- and 63-Across
- 43 Old counters
- 44 Aussie hoppers
- 45 Daisy ____
- 46 Gadgets with helical parts called worms
- 49 The Constitution St.
- 50 Cadenza maker
- 51 50-Across' locale

Down

- 1 Where the Sky and the Sun collide, for short?
- 2 Scam
- 3 Part of the pkg.
- 4 Jab
- 5 "Darn, it's cold!"
- 6 Airport near Tel Aviv
- 7 Withhold information about, say
- 8 Beyond noble
- 9 Supports in shop class
- 10 Comic strip drooler
- 11 Mythical Spartan queen
- 12 The mi. in Mile-High City
- 13 Opposite of admit
- 18 Kyrgyzstan city
- 22 Walther ____: James Bond's pistol
- 24 Thom of shoes
- 25 Tyrrhenian Sea island

- 27 Name on the "Robot" series books
- 28 Bag End notable
- 29 To be, in Toledo
- 31 Bizarre
- 32 Berne's river
- 33 Italian cathedral
- 34 Like Andean pyramids
- 35 Kind of bucket
- 37 Outdoor exercise choice
- 40 Luther opponent Johann ____
- 41 Louisiana Territory state
- 42 Discovery astronaut James
- 47 Cannes corp.
- 48 Imp
- 49 Stone monuments
- 52 Word of disgust
- 53 Up-tempo
- 54 Too much sun, they say
- 55 Club in a Manilow song
- 56 Baseball stats
- 57 Religious prefix
- 59 Corner piece
- 60 Fizzy drink
- 61 Bit of introductory Latin
- 64 100 nanojoules
- 65 41-Down college

Find the answers online at: breezejmu.org/sites/crossword_answers

The Breeze

Serving James Madison University Since 1922

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Harrisonburg, VA 22801
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MISSION

The Breeze, the student-run newspaper of James Madison University, serves student, faculty and staff readership by reporting news involving the campus and local community. The Breeze strives to be impartial and fair in its reporting and firmly believes in First Amendment rights.

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"To the press alone, chequered as it is with abuses, the world is indebted for all the triumphs which have been gained by reason and humanity over error and oppression."

— JAMES MADISON, 1800

B

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University aims to improve tagline

JMU hopes to attract more students, faculty and funding with updated marketing strategies

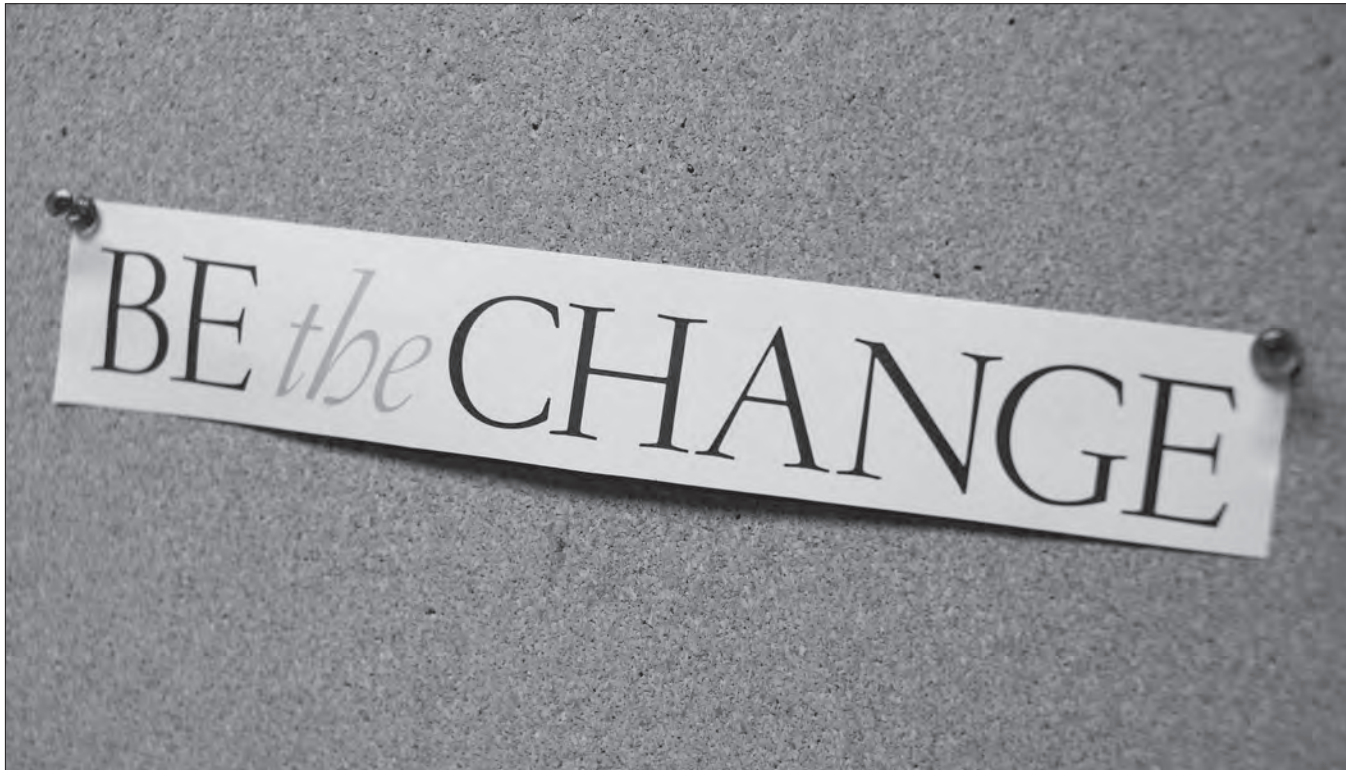


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ERIN WILLIAMS / THE BREEZE

JMU Communications and Marketing is researching the tagline “Be the Change” to better improve how it’s presented to prospective and current students and faculty. Although the tagline will not be changed, the strategies used to promote it will be improved with help from an outside agency.

By **KATIE O'BRIEN**
contributing writer

JMU Communications and Marketing is looking to hire a marketing agency to study and improve JMU’s brand and tagline “Be the Change.” The department wants to continue attracting more educated and passionate professors, good students and also private funding.

Hiring a marketing agency could also help JMU get on the national radar.

“The vision to become the national model of the engaged university, which [President Jon Alger] has been saying, is really changing a lot of the way the university is seeing itself and emphasizing that being totally engaged in what you are doing is really important,” Andy Perrine, associate vice president of

communication and marketing, said.

According to Bill Wyatt, JMU’s senior director of communications and university spokesman, the University Communications and Marketing department had been considering this idea for a while, but it was a matter of finding resources to finally get the project started.

“We’re doing this to bring in fresh ideas to look at the market, to see what the needs are and what the market will bear in terms of messaging and things like that,” Wyatt said.

There are three main issues with JMU marketing that the agency hired by the university will need to address.

Due to the recent increase of students applying to colleges and universities, the first problem is that JMU must compete more aggressively for the best students.

“We will always get students,” Perrine said. “JMU is popular and people love it, but the really good students who are smart, cool, fun and gifted are going to be harder to come by, because everyone wants them.”

Another reason for hiring an agency is because the funding model for higher education is changing more toward private support, so JMU needs to be more aggressive in attracting private funding.

The third reason is that media have become disaggregated. Many media outlets make it difficult to know which ones most people will pay attention to.

Tom Rini, a sophomore marketing major, believes changing how JMU markets itself will be beneficial to the school.

see **CHANGE**, page 4

Leaving a legacy

Former JMU math professor dies at age 90



Former JMU mathematics professor Gordon McCrea Fisher died Saturday at the age of 90. Fisher taught at JMU from 1967 to 1995.

Born on Oct. 5, 1925, in Little

Falls, Minnesota, Fisher taught himself three languages by the time he was 9 years old. He was editor of his high school paper at both high schools he attended, and enlisted in the Navy following graduation. Fisher served as a Navy corpsman during World War II, working at Fleet Hospital 115 in Guam while also writing for the newspaper on his base.

Fisher majored in mathematics with a minor in philosophy at the University of Miami following World War II, where he met his wife, Helene Dawn Smith. The two were married at City Hall in New York on June 19, 1956. They have two daughters, Andrea and Jennifer.

Fisher got his Ph.D. in mathematics at Louisiana State University in 1959. Over the course of his life, he taught also taught at Tulane University, the University of Michigan, and the University of Otago and the University of Waikato in New Zealand. While at JMU, Fisher became a Madison Scholar, nominated by his colleagues for his accomplishments.

After his retirement, Fisher went on to act in Charlottesville and with the Valley Players in Harrisonburg. He is survived by his wife, Dawn Fisher; his daughters, Andrea and Jennifer; his son-in-law, David Berger; and his grandsons, Liam Rowland and Daniel Berger.

-staff report

IN BRIEF

MARYLAND

Bodies of JMU grad and friend recovered

The bodies of Matthew Davis, a JMU alumnus ('15) who graduated with a degree in geology, and Earling Stephen Lamp, his hunting partner, were recovered on Feb. 10, according to the Capital Gazette.

Davis and Lamp went missing on Jan. 19 while on a duck hunting trip on the Severn River in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. Witnesses called 911 when they heard screams and saw a man go underwater without resurfacing.

The JMU Geology Club has created a GoFundMe account to raise money to plant a tree in the Arboretum in Davis' honor.

WORLD

U.Va. student detained in North Korea speaks out

Otto Warmbier, a junior business major at the University of Virginia, stood in front of a Democratic People's Republic of Korea court on Monday and proclaimed himself guilty of attempting to steal a sign from his hotel in Pyongyang. According to CNN, this was the first time Warmbier has been seen since his arrest on Jan. 2, and the first time his family has heard from him since that date.

According to CNN, Warmbier traveled to North Korea with Young Pioneer Tours, a Chinese tour group.

The allegations include charges that Warmbier committed the act under the instruction of the Z Society, a secret society in U.Va., as well as an anti-communist church in Ohio and the CIA, according to CNN. Warmbier appeared to confirm these charges during the video, although it isn't clear whether he made the speech under duress.

According to CNN, a member of the North Korean government with “direct knowledge of the case” said Warmbier requested that the news conference take place.

Poetry in bloom

Professor discusses founding the Furious Flower center and conference



COURTESY OF ERIC DANIEL LEGG

Joanne Gabbin directed the honors program for 19 years before leaving to pursue a position as the director of the Furious Flower Poetry Conference, which she founded. Gabbin has authored several books and won many awards.

By **ERIC DANIEL LEGG**
contributing writer

Joanne Gabbin is a JMU professor of African-American literature, and is the founder of the Furious Flower Poetry Center on campus. After being the director of the honors program at JMU for 19 years, Gabbin left the position to pursue a directing position for the poetry center following the overwhelming success of the 2004 Furious Flower Poetry Conference. She was inducted into the International Literary Hall of Fame for Writers of African Descent in 2005. Gabbin is the author and editor of several books including “Sterling A. Brown: Building the Black Aesthetic Tradition” and “The Furious Flowering of African American Poetry.” She also owns 150 Franklin Street Gallery in Harrisonburg.

What exactly is a “furious flower?”

The ‘furious flower’ phrase comes from a poem by Gwendolyn Brooks. And the poem ‘The Second Sermon on the Warpland,’ and the line that I took this phrase from is, ‘The time cracks into furious flower / Lifts its face all unashamed / And sways in wicked grace.’ And when I read that line of poetry, I realized that it not only represents Gwendolyn Brooks, ‘the furious flower,’ but it also represented the period of her influence in the late 20th century in terms of literature. And that period that Gwendolyn Brooks represented from the 1950s through to the 1990s and into the 21st century was a period where African-American writers started to use

their writing as weapons for their freedom. You can see furious writing, with rage, and then also writing with beauty. So the combination of rage and beauty; that’s the furious flower.

How did your meeting with Nikki Giovanni and Maya Angelou come about?

Well, we got together; it was at Nikki Giovanni’s urging that we do a tribute to Toni Morrison and so we went down to Maya Angelou’s home in Winston-Salem, and she had been convinced by Nikki that we should do this. And so all three of us planned this spectacular tribute to Toni Morrison that happened in October 2012 at Virginia Tech. And the spark that encouraged Nikki to do this – and I went along with it because I thought it was a wonderful idea – was that I was encouraged to do a memorial tribute to Lucille Clifton called ‘73 poems for 73 years’ in 2010, right after her death. But the only downside to that was that Lucille Clifton had no idea that we were doing it, and that she did not get to enjoy hearing people read her poems. So, that’s when Nikki said, ‘Let’s do this for Toni Morrison, who is our Nobel laureate in literature, outstanding writer, probably the most important writer of our time.’ And so we did it. We did it at Virginia Tech, and we did it there because Virginia Tech has an auditorium that holds 4,000 people. And so, we had more than 4,000 people come to this. We had an overflow room that had 1,000 people in it. And at that particular time, I presented to Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou The Furious Flower Lifetime Achievement Award.

Looking into the future, which direction do you hope to see the Furious Flower Poetry Center take?

I hope it’s going to be around so that I or somebody who is director at the time will do Furious Flower Conference 2024. And I hope that it has the financial stability and continues to bring recognition to JMU for years and years to come. We have the distinction of being the first center solely devoted to African-American literature and African-American poetry. There is now, just as of two months ago, a new center that focuses on African-American poetry at the University of Pittsburgh, and it is being headed up by Terrance Hayes and Dawn Lundy Martin. So I’m hoping for great success with that group, because there couldn’t be too many organizations with that particular objective: to make it clear that this is not only a beautiful field of literature, but one that represents so well the American experience.

CONTACT Eric Daniel Legg at legged@dukes.jmu.edu.

RESPONSE | Ten sexual assault alerts issued this year, community responds

from front

There are many reasons why sexual assaults happen with the frequency they do.

“The biggest cause of sexual assaults lies with the offender,” Miller said. “So much blame is put on the victim when we should educate people on how not to become an offender. We need to put blame where it is deserved.”

This stance is widely agreed upon, but according to Sgt. Jason Kidd of the criminal investigations division of HPD, there are other reasons for the prevalence of sexual assault.

“Drinking in general is an issue and perpetrators sometimes make decisions they may not normally make, and others put themselves in bad positions when they’re drunk,” Kidd said. “Being under influence of alcohol is dangerous for both sides, but there’s certainly no excuse for sexual assault.”

Methods of responding to sexual assaults aren’t perfect at this point, but there are many measures taken in an attempt to handle the situation, to care for the victim and to hold the correct person accountable. However, all of this can only happen in the cases that assaults are reported, and most often they’re not.

“All students receive sexual assault education and faculty and staff have Title IX training,” said Bill Wyatt, JMU’s senior director of communications and university spokesman.

Local sexual assault response teams, like the one at the Collins Center, largely handle these cases.

“As part of this multi-disciplinary response, we are part of the local Sexual Assault Response Team, which combines law enforcement, victim advocates, prosecutors, social services agencies, medical professionals, university officials and other agencies to work together on our response to sexual violence,” Kidd said.

SARTs are essential when handling sexual assaults, although not all local SARTs are the same. They vary from community to community when it comes to their functions and make ups.

“Typically, but not always, SARTs goals are generally related to improving the quality and accessibility of services for victims and improving the treatment of victims by sexual assault responders [as most important], followed by goals related to improving criminal justice system outcomes and goals related to prevention/education,” Karen Stahl, the technical assistance coordinator at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, said in an email.

The Collins Center, which manages Harrisonburg’s SART, is also actively involved in handling sexual assault cases. In this local SART, the center serves as the first responder to the hospital after a sexual assault and gives the victim the option to have a Physical Evidence Recovery Kit within 72 hours of the assault.

“We take the lead in options for the victims including providing resources and contacting the police and nurses,” Miller said. “We also offer follow-up phone calls for the victims to contact other services. After that, it is victim controlled.”

Many incidents also need assistance by the HPD. There have been five alleged sexual assaults reported via the Madison Alert system this semester and 10 total this school year. That doesn’t include two reported incidents where two women were given drinks at parties and woke up the next morning unable to recall the events of the previous night. HPD spearheads the investigations of these crimes and alerts JMU police about them.

“A lot of communication takes place between the department, Title IX and other departments,” Kidd said.

HPD continues to take steps to improve its response to these types of crimes.

“In December, HPD received a grant to fund a new position that will specialize in investigating violence against women,” Kidd said. “The focus of this position will be on domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking and similar offenses.”

JMU also works to educate students on the issue and what options are available to them.

“The university takes this issue very seriously,” Wyatt said. “Students received training on sexual assault and have vast resources and processes in place to investigate sexual assaults.”

Still, Miller said, education alone can’t prevent all sexual assaults.

“Victims receive a lot of pressure to minimize what happened,” Miller said. “It keeps other people from coming forward. If people begin to support victims, it will change the likelihood of wanting to report.”

CONTACT Brooke Blaney at blaneybk@dukes.jmu.edu.

ELECTION | Combined efforts of clubs resulted in registering 2,087 students to vote



ALEXIS MILLER / THE BREEZE

Tuesday was the first time Convo was used as the on-campus voting precinct, and it had the third highest turnout in the City of Harrisonburg. While it was Convo’s first time open for voting, it was also some students’ first time participating in an election.

from front

Convo. He noticed a steady stream of voters all day and that there were a number of first-time voters.

“It seems as if it’s not too lopsided,” Alexander said, noticing there wasn’t a big difference in voter turnout between the Democratic and Republican primaries. He mentioned that Virginia’s open primary doesn’t require party registration prior to voting.

Gaby Rios, a junior health sciences major and first-time voter, believed the on-campus voting precinct allowed for a higher number of student voters.

“I love how I was able to be a part

of the election process,” Rios said. “Being able to go to a polling precinct and go through the whole process was fun and exhilarating because my vote was counted.”

Carter Black, president of JMU’s College Democrats club, recognized the efforts made by campus organizations to register and mobilize voters. The initial number of eligible people registered to vote at the Convocation Center was 37, and when Black got back from winter break, she aimed to increase that number to 1,000. They ended up registering 2,087 students to vote. She attributed much of the success to the manpower involved.

“We’ve been headlining everything under Harrisonburg Votes or

Duke Votes to try to stay nonpartisan,” Black said. “We have people from College Republicans in on the effort, Virginia21 and other civic engagement organizations.”

To raise the registration numbers, members of these organizations provided many classrooms with registration forms and guided students step by step to ensure accuracy. It was an initiative that they will look to repeat.

“The voter registration has never been done in this quantity before,” Black said. “This was unprecedented. We’re hoping to match that for the future.”

CONTACT Bjorn Johnson at johnsobo@dukes.jmu.edu.

CHANGE | JMU aims to have new direction for tagline over next five years



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ERIN WILLIAMS / THE BREEZE

University Communications and Marketing issued a request for marketing agency proposals last semester, and received 31 responses from all over the country. The list will later be narrowed to 10 agencies, which will be invited to campus to present their plans to anyone who wants to attend.

from page 3

“I think it’s a great thing that they are trying to market the school in a different way and trying to separate it from other schools, especially other Virginia schools,” Rini said.

University Communications and Marketing issued a request for proposals from marketing agencies last semester. Companies had until the beginning of February to respond. A popular advertising magazine, Adweek, published an article about JMU’s agency search. JMU had 31 responses from agencies in cities like Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta and Philadelphia, among others.

A team within University Communications and Marketing will narrow the list of responses to about 10 and will invite those agencies to campus to give a presentation of their plans. These presentations will be open to anyone who wishes to attend.

“We will do it in a large place and the agency will have to come and say, ‘This is why you should pick us,’” Perrine said. “Then I’m going to get feedback from everyone who comes and basically figure out who gets us the best deal and who seems to have the best grasp on a way to move forward.”

Perrine especially wants to give media arts and design and communication studies students the opportunity to see the plans in action and to observe professionals at work.

Rini thinks this could be beneficial to students who really love JMU or are interested in getting some business experience.

“I think that would just be a great opportunity for experience,” Rini said.

The final decision for an agency will be made by June 30.

Both Perrine and Wyatt said there’s nothing currently wrong with JMU’s brand and tagline, “Be the Change,” but that they believe it needs to be refined and made more clear.

“We’ve looked at it once since I’ve been here and we decided to keep it, because it was something that sort of galvanized the community,” Wyatt said. “We want to look at that again if it’s still something that people rally around, or if there is a fresh way to present it in marketing materials or the way we talk about the university.”

According to Perrine, the state of the JMU brand is actually pretty strong.

“The way that I would describe is that, we get as much in any given year if not more applications for undergraduates than Tech and UVa,” Perrine said. “Tech and UVa. have a marketing and communications department of like 70 or 80 and I’ve got 21 full-timers and about 20 students and we’re still pulling in the same amount of attention.”

University Communications and Marketing has found that

many freshmen say they want to “Be the Change” in their personal statement in their applications to the university. This reflects the success of the “Be the Change” tagline in marketing to prospective students.

Rather than using JMU employees to develop new strategy and execution, University Communications and Marketing plans to hire the agency to help come up with a new direction for the brand and tagline for the next three to five years. The staff can continue its own work on attracting students, engaging alumni and supporting fundraising while the changes are being made.

According to Wyatt, hiring an outside agency isn’t a reflection of current employees not being able to do their jobs, but a way to find a resource for them to create fresh ideas and improve upon the good work they’re already doing.

“I think it’s a great thing that they are trying to market the school in a different way and trying to separate it from other schools, especially other Virginia schools.”

Tom Rini
sophomore marketing major

The University Communications and Marketing department was organized shortly after Perrine was hired in 2000, while the “Be the Change” tagline was implemented in 2006.

The JMU brand has three main components.

The first component of the brand, according to Perrine, is that JMU attracts professors who want to teach rather than have the class taught by graduate assistants, while the professor does research.

The second part of the brand is that JMU attracts a particular kind of student who’s an engaged individual.

“We attract a kind of student who doesn’t want to come to a university to become that kind of university, but to come to JMU to be yourself,” Perrine said. “We have individuals here and we have people here who really just want to engage and do something, rather than be something else.”

The final aspect of the brand and tagline is JMU’s unique one-sentence mission statement: “We are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who will lead productive and meaningful lives.”

Rather than stating a long list of what it does to educate students like many other schools, JMU focuses on one simple statement about the benefit of the education provided at the university.

According to Perrine, JMU has a 94 percent satisfaction rate among alumni. Staff members like Perrine are excited to show their love for JMU from the new perspective that the marketing agency comes up with.

“Rather than saying the university is going to change the world, we’re telling students to be the change,” Perrine said. “It’s kind of an inspiring message to all of us — students, faculty — that you can be the change.”

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Put yourself first

Don't let a fear of looking weak stop you from keeping your health in check



A few weeks ago, I got sick with a 103-degree fever. I'd been feeling tired and weak since waking up, but I brushed it off as sleep deprivation. I didn't realize anything was seriously wrong until that afternoon when I got home; I'd worked a full seven-hour shift on my feet without saying anything because I didn't want to be perceived as whiny or incompetent.

This kind of unnecessary stoicism is too common among college students. Many of us are reluctant to admit our own limits because we're too afraid we'll be judged poorly in internships or entry-level jobs. It's natural to want to impress, especially when you're just beginning a career, but it shouldn't be at the expense of your health.

Ignoring minor or moderate health issues in order to be perceived as a more valuable employee will often spiral into a larger problem. If you avoid taking one day off work to recover from a cold, you may end up having to take a week off to get over a flu that you catch after not resting your weakened immune system.

Admitting your own fallibility can be difficult, especially when you're trying to prove yourself in a world that hasn't yet been convinced of your greatness. But if you're in a position to choose between your health and your professional development, you should always choose your health. Plenty more job opportunities will come along, but if you ignore your body's signals, it may cause permanent damage.

Protecting your health also includes preserving your mental wellness. Psychological unrest can come in many forms, and it's always worth addressing. If you're feeling undue mental distress, it's OK to slow down before the problem compounds on itself. Mental and physical health are inextricably tied, so to take care of one you must place equal importance on the other.

A lot of young adults base their academic and professional behavior on what other people expect

from them and think of them. This creates an environment of assumption in which people place unrealistic expectations on themselves based on outside pressure that may not even exist. Often, someone will neglect their well-being out of fear that they'll look unmotivated when in reality that apprehension has no true basis.

People often make their professional or academic reputation top priority because they feel that they have to measure up at any cost in the competitive career market. Of course, these fears have some basis in reality — a company may be more likely to hire the person who never takes a day off over the applicant who has the occasional sick day or family emergency. But occasionally having to compromise your work schedule doesn't mean you've failed, it just means you live a well-rounded life.

The trade-off between professional success and personal wellness is a fluctuating boundary that can only be determined by the person in question. Only the individual knows what her or his health needs are, but the key is to pay attention to seemingly insignificant health indicators to make sure you're not overlooking the beginnings of a problem.

Had I realized that my unusual fatigue warranted attention and stayed home from work, I might've gotten well more quickly. As it was, I later went to class while I was still sick, and I ended up having a high fever for a full week. I was afraid that if I missed work or school, people would think I was lazy, but in trying to accommodate the people around me I compromised my own health.

Allowing our own insecurities to influence how we deal with illness won't help anything in the long run. We all, myself included, need to pay better attention to what our bodies are telling us and not be afraid to take a sick day. It's OK to prioritize yourself and your wellness, and anyone worth knowing will respect you for doing so.

Grace Blackburn is a junior media arts and design major. Contact Grace at blackbe@dukes.jmu.edu.

RACHEL PETTY | Petty for your thoughts

People look like themselves, regardless of religion or ethnicity



"You don't look Jewish," "No wonder your hair is curly" and "Aren't Jewish people supposed to have big noses?" are all things people have said to me. Yes, I'm Jewish. Yes, my hair is curly. And I personally don't love my nose. But why do any of these things matter?

Telling someone they do or don't look like their race, ethnicity or religion makes it seem as though those are the only things people notice. Shouldn't we be judging people based on their personalities and character rather than on how they look?

Something that always makes me laugh is when people say I do or don't look Jewish. Reality check — Judaism is a religion, not a race or ethnicity. And even if it were, it would still be offensive.

Many Jewish people came from the same part of the world, which is why some of us do have similar features. However, there are plenty of Jewish people who don't have the "typical Jewish look," and that doesn't make them any less Jewish.

Telling someone they don't look Jewish, black or Muslim can make it seem like it's a good thing, which can be offensive. People

are born with a certain race and ethnicity, and everyone is entitled to their own religion.

Some people may even feel like they don't belong to a certain group if they're told that they don't look like the majority of the people in it. We should be able to connect with people similar to us and celebrate our differences, regardless of how dark our skin is or how curly our hair is.

We need to stop putting people into categories based on how they look.

As a society, we're quick to stereotype people based on how they appear from the outside. If we were to get to know people before judging them, we'd likely find a lot more people we connect with and a lot fewer who we outcast.

Telling someone they do or don't look like a certain race, ethnicity or religion makes it seem like all the people in that category look

the same, which is untrue. We each look like ourselves, individual and unique.

Regardless of what your background is or what you look like, we're each our own person and should be accepted and appreciated for that. Let's start acting like it.

Rachel Petty is a junior media arts and design major. Contact Rachel at pettyrb@dukes.jmu.edu.

MADDELYNNE PARKER | The Breeze

NETFLIX

recommendation of the week

TV: "Star Trek" (1966-69)

3 seasons (all on Netflix)

As a little girl, I spent more time watching old-fashioned movies and TV shows than anything else. My dad was the major factor in this. While my little brother would be napping, I would lounge on the couch, my dad in his La-Z-Boy, watching "Leave It to Beaver" or "The Fly." My favorite old show to watch with him was "Star Trek: The Original Series."

In 2011, "Star Trek: The Original Series" and many of the other later "Star Trek" series and movies were added to Netflix. "Star Trek" isn't only for the science-fiction fan, but was one of the first TV shows in American history to include an ethnically mixed cast that dealt with real and serious issues that were present during its airtime.

For those who don't know, "Star Trek" is about an American space vessel, the Enterprise, that travels all parts of our galaxy with the mission: "to go where no man has gone before." In almost every episode, Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock are faced with a series of trials and tribulations to better understand an alien planet or species.

With the original creation of "Star Trek," writers intended to comment on what was happening in the world. This is apparent in

its pilot episode that NBC failed to air. They believed it was too sexual to show because of its dancing green girls and subsequent kissing. "Star Trek" writers pushed the boundaries of 1960s modern TV.

Another example of "Star Trek's" innovation for TV is that it was the first show to have an interracial kiss take place. In 1969, Captain Kirk can be seen in the episode titled "Plato's Stepchildren" kissing Uhura. Not only did "Star Trek" push the norms of television through sexuality, but addressed political issues such as Nazi Germany and sexism.

Star Trek has become one of the biggest franchises of the world, next to "Star Wars." There are currently 13 movies and seven series depictions. In January 2017, CBS All Access will premiere its newest "Star Trek" series for fans across the globe.

"Star Trek" is the perfect show for those who enjoy action-adventure that includes deeper meanings. It can be watched in any order of episodes or skipped around, because each episode is its own story. For any new fan or old, "Star Trek: The Original Series" is the perfect starting and ending point to the franchise.

KEN BYRNE | letter to the editor

JMU needs to step up on matters of sexual assault

The JMU Dukes should be called the make-me-pukes. There have been no less than four reported sexual assault crimes this semester, 10 in just this school year alone. Sounds like a wonderful place to visit.

The campus police won't investigate the off-campus crimes in places where primarily students live, yet those same students are, by default, JMU's responsibility. The motto on the campus police car should read "we accept no responsibility." If 10 sexual abuses are being reported, how many aren't for fear or lack of confidence? Or lack of "evidence."

The university accountability system structure spells out that the school indeed does have jurisdiction: "Jurisdiction includes all violations occurring on campus or on university leased or controlled properties, in study abroad programs, in Rockingham County or the City of Harrisonburg for alcohol and drug violations or felonies, and student behavior in any location that might be detrimental to the mission of the university, including felonies or sexual misconduct."

Most cases go unreported and the girl could leave campus for another school to avoid seeing the person or quit college altogether. She could end up in therapy, having nightmares about the incident, unwilling to connect with friends. Yeah, that's a girl who "wanted it." All the while the guy heads to the next party trolling for the next notch on his "how many drunk, drugged

or incapacitated girls I can take advantage of" trophy.

Cases aren't being prosecuted because the boy has one side and the girl the other, regardless of how obvious the crime was. If there are conflicting stories, the female in shock is the one carrying the burden of proof, even against the backdrop of the sexual assault culture pervasive at JMU. The girl carries her trauma with her forever. The boy says "who's next?"

The JMU Student Standards of Conduct state, "Each student is expected to comply with university policies as they pertain to student conduct. A student who violates state laws, county laws or city ordinances is subject to prosecution and university disciplinary action."

Girls have a running joke about having to cover their cups at parties. It's sad when hospital nurses, school officials and local law enforcement are aware, but are still unable to contain this plague forced upon the city of Harrisonburg and the female student body.

While there are good kids, the bad seeds seem to keep popping up more and more. It's time for the JMU make-me-want-to-puke administration to stand up and take responsibility, do something about the violence and sexual predators and eliminate the all-too-real "joke" of covering your cup.

Ken Byrne is a resident of Herndon, Virginia.

DARTS & PATS

Darts & Pats are anonymously submitted and printed on a space-available basis. Submissions creatively depict a given situation, person or event and do not necessarily reflect the truth. Submit Darts & Pats at breezejmu.org

An "I-need-my-beauty-sleep" dart to my excitement for spring break.
From a senior who can't sleep because she's so excited about a week of relaxation.

A "don't-forget-the-whole-picture" dart to all the people saying any vote against Trump is a good vote.
From a student who's just as scared of candidates like Ted Cruz and Ben Carson.

A "thanks-for-eating-guacamole" pat to my roommates for always indulging in my favorite snack with me.
From a junior who likes watching "The Bachelor" with fantastic friends and food.

A "you've-certainly-changed-my-mind" pat to John Oliver for airing out the truth about Donald Trump.
From a student who has trouble sifting through all the superficial nonsense surrounding presidential candidates.

A "yeah-right" dart to my professor who thinks I'll be doing school work over break.
From a senior who'll be spending her week with Mickey Mouse, not her computer.

A "thanks-for-making-me-smile" pat to my favorite bus driver.
From your loyal Route 1 rider.

A "congratulations" pat to the new Breeze editorial staff.
From the sports desk.

Editorial Policies

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The Breeze welcomes and encourages readers to voice their opinions through letters and guest columns. Letters must be no longer than 250 words. Guest columns must be no more than 650 words.

The Breeze reserves the right to edit submissions for length, grammar and if material is libelous, factually inaccurate or unclear. The Breeze assumes the rights to any published work. Opinions expressed in this page, with the exception of editorials, are not necessarily those of The Breeze or its staff.

Letters and guest columns should be submitted in print or via e-mail and must include name, phone number, major/year if author is a current student (or year of graduation), professional title (if applicable) and place of residence if author is not a JMU student.

KAYLA MARSH | Marsh madness

Respect the vote

Everyone should be encouraged to exercise their civic duty



The hate toward Donald Trump is all too real. And that's OK. This is America, which means everyone has the right to an opinion and a right to vote. Lately I've seen multiple Facebook statuses and comments from passionate Americans that encourage their friends, family and Facebook acquaintances to vote in the primary election, but have tried to discourage anyone planning on voting for Trump. I've even heard a friend or two say, "Everyone make sure you vote! But not if you're voting for Donald Trump."

Joking or not, discouraging Trump supporters from voting is rude and irrational. Trump has made his own reputation for himself that doesn't look good to many people, and the negative stigma that the media have created around this GOP candidate has made him look like a monster, which many argue that he truly is. Obviously he makes points that sit well with and seem valid to some Americans, and these points have made him popular in the race to presidency. I'm not a Trump supporter, and still don't

know who I'm going to vote for, but I'm a fan of having a free country that allows room for all political opinions and ideas, which is what makes America so great.

We should be encouraging our fellow Americans to exercise their right to vote, whether we agree with their decisions or not. Men and women have laid down an endless amount of sacrifices for this right, and it's so important that this right is both utilized and respected.

If you dislike Trump, vote against him. But it seems ridiculous to constantly call people racist, sexist or hateful for simply having an opinion that favors the big, bad Trump as a candidate for president.

Statuses and comments on social media that encourage people to vote "unless it's for Donald Trump" are ridiculous and disgusting.

Voting is one of the greatest privileges we have as Americans, and while many people dislike Trump for good reason, please go out and vote for whoever you believe the right candidate is.

Kayla Marsh is a senior media arts and design major. Contact Kayla at marshkm@dukes.jmu.edu.



KELSEY HARDING | THE BREEZE

MEGAN MATHEWSON | contributing columnist

All lives matter

All right, let's get in formation.

Most of us have seen the Beyonce "Formation" music video featuring questionable references to police brutality and are aware of the growing popularity of the "Black Lives Matter" movement.

However, if you take a closer look, media abstain from reporting stories about the brutality that happens to the rest of American citizens if the story doesn't contain a reference to racial hatred in some way. This needs to be addressed.

Media are eating up the Black Lives Matter movement.

For instance, the Oscars were criticized for having a lack of diversity and Chris Rock, the host of the event, was found on stage making various jokes and comments to millions of viewers.

He opened with an array of interesting comments that primed the audience for the theme of racial discrimination throughout the night, such as, "Well, I'm here, at the Academy Awards. Also known as the White People's Choice Awards."

What is the media's role in such controversial topics?

I've seen countless stories covered on police brutality on a variety of news platforms. Yet, I came across a story about a former Marine unassumingly enjoying a meal at a McDonald's, who was asked, "Do you believe black lives matter?" After ignoring this question several times, the

group of teens started yelling that he was a racist and proceeded to assault and rob him.

This story remains untold on national media.

How is it that there's a viral spread of media and citizen attention for Black Lives Matter, but a substantially minimal amount of attention for all American citizens?

If there's one thing we, as Americans, should stand for, it's that all lives matter. It's not the color of your skin, the language you speak, the clothes you wear, the culture you come from or your socioeconomic status that should tell you who or who not to care about or who to pay attention to on the news.

Citizen is defined as a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country. At what point do we stop focusing on the stigma of brutality against a certain race and shift our attention to the more prevalent issue of American brutality in general?

The color of your skin is a physical trait; it makes you no more or less American than anyone else who's a legal citizen of this country.

If you live in America, respect fellow citizens. It's as simple as that.

Megan Mathewson is a junior media arts and design and political science double major. Contact Megan at mathewme@dukes.jmu.edu.

SATIRICAL NEWS COLUMN

New littering policy in my apartment is too strict

By MATT MURPHY
The Breeze

Recently, the folks I share an apartment with have been cracking down on "messy" habits. First, they started to vacuum a lot more, which I don't see the point of since it immediately gets dirty again. Then they started the whole "don't hoard garbage under your bed" thing that forces me to take the trash outside every week instead of hanging onto it.

Now they've implemented a policy that makes every roommate responsible for casually throwing trash on the floor of the apartment under the punishment of dish duty for a week. It's easy to see how this is getting a bit ridiculous.

I'm not sure what my roommates see in their idealistic visions of our apartment, but the totalitarian regime that's formed behind these unreasonable standards of hygiene is on a passionate crusade to make my life as stressful as possible. The expectation to preserve some immaculate aesthetic in our down-market student housing is unfounded and generally intractable. When I eat, the only energy I should

be expending is lifting the food (usually Hot Pockets) to my mouth. I don't want to have to clean up any dishes (thankfully I found an unused closet that I can throw my used dishes into) or throw anything away. I want to just place it on the floor and walk away, like the free-willed human being that I am. I don't think that's too much to ask.

I don't live to entertain the germaphobic whims of my friends, and I certainly don't live to be constantly on edge about where I dispose of refuse. An empty bag of popcorn on the floor isn't going to kill anyone, and neither are a couple more empty popcorn bags strewn about various places. It adds character to a house that lacks pizzazz and I might boldly add that it's an improvement to the otherwise morose area we call a living room.

No one seems to agree with me or speak up either. This is likely because of the implied threats by those in my house who've formed the neat-freak coalition. It seems the days of casually throwing a candy wrapper on the floor are over, at least for now.

CONTACT Matt Murphy at murph4ma@dukes.jmu.edu.

NAHLA ABOUTABL | respect the riot

The double standards of higher education



I was sitting with a group of friends a few weekends ago and one girl raised the following question: "Would you choose a guaranteed happy marriage over a college degree?" The girl who asked made sure to add that you can pursue your dream during this "happy marriage" freely, and then asked us to choose which path we would take in this hypothetical situation.

"Are you kidding me? Of course I'd choose to go to college!" was my answer. It was also the answer of everyone else, except the girl who first posed the question. We ganged up on her, telling her that her choice wasn't a smart one and that she should definitely choose to get her college degree — that she'll be more successful that way.

Isn't that what strong, independent women do?

It took me about 10 minutes to realize I had just gone against my own definition of feminism and apologized for my reactionary comments. I asked the girls how many successful men they can name who don't have a college degree. One example we used was Steve Jobs, who built an empire without one. We also thought about the many artists (both male and female) who've pursued their dreams without first going to college. Success is possible without a degree, so why are we harder on women when it comes to getting an education?

My friends and I realized that, for women, the road to success requires more work so that they can even be on the same playing field as men. We realized that women have to push themselves much harder and work on proving their intelligence to a society that's always questioning their abilities. We often look up to and

idolize male, non-degree-holding entrepreneurs and innovators, while always stressing the importance of a higher education for women in order to gain independence and credibility and questioning the sanity of women who choose to opt out of college.

Each woman has the right to choose whichever path she feels empowers her the most. We should never apply our own definitions of fulfillment and success on others who undoubtedly have their own. We should also never shame women into adopting their own personal definitions of what feminism is, lest we rob women of their freedom to choose their lifestyles in the way that makes them most comfortable.

Nahla Aboutabl is a senior international affairs major. Contact Nahla at aboutanm@dukes.jmu.edu.

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A new hot spot

Popular college town bar Brickhouse Tavern to take over former Buffalo Wild Wings building



ERIN WILLIAMS / THE BREEZE

The Brickhouse Tavern is popular among college students in its two current locations: Williamsburg and Newport News, Virginia. The Harrisonburg location is slated to open in mid-April.

By CAROLINE BRANDT
The Breeze

The former home of Buffalo Wild Wings, across from the Quad on South Main Street, finally has a new tenant. Brickhouse Tavern will open its doors in mid-April after major reconstruction to the existing building.

After a six-month process of elimination, Brickhouse Tavern owner Daroon Bargash decided on the Harrisonburg location and purchased the vacant building in January.

“We did look in two different places; we looked at JMU and we looked at U.Va.,” Bargash said.

Brickhouse is known for its pizza and wings, specials and low prices. For 10 years, Brickhouse Tavern has been No. 1 in the Hampton Roads, Virginia, area for pizza. Like its pizza its wings are also noteworthy, ranking third in Virginia, and 23rd in the world according to Bargash.

“Nobody by far can touch us,” Bargash said.

The low prices of Brickhouse Tavern, like its \$9.99 large pizza special, maintain a steady flow of college students at its locations near the College of William & Mary and Christopher Newport University.

“I tell kids it’s cheaper for you to come drink here than you sitting down in the comfort of your own house and drink, and that’s reality,” Bargash said.

Specials from its other locations, which it plans to incorporate at the JMU location, include all-you-can-eat wings, half-off burger night and, on Sundays, its popular Sunday brunch special and a Bloody Mary bar.

At the CNU location, CNU student and senior information systems and business double major Shaquille Brooks can attest to Brickhouse Tavern’s reputation.

“What makes it even better is the staff is amazing, they’re so personable and very friendly,” Brooks said in an email. “I go at least twice a week.”

Brooks enjoys Sunday night football with the 20 wings for \$10 deal.

“Again, I really like the staff,” Brooks said. “They all know me by name and I know them by name.”

According to Bargash, many 21st birthdays are celebrated at the CNU Brickhouse Tavern. Brooks spent his 21st birthday at the Brickhouse.

“It’s the tradition we have at CNU, everyone celebrates their 21st there,” Brooks said. “I can’t think of anyone who hasn’t celebrated their birthday there, unless it was during the summer and they were back at home.”

After renovating the inside of the old Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant completely, Bargash said construction for the new restaurant began at the beginning of February. The entire restaurant will be renovated including the basement.

“It was a complete facelift,” store manager Brian “Falty” Faltynowicz said.

Brickhouse will also come complete with 16 flat-screen TVs, a dance floor and at least 30 draft lines at the bar. The bar will be equipped with over 2,000 different brands of beer, wine and liquor, with the classics and even local beers.

“I’m a local guy; I love advertising locals’ beers just to see what the areas require, what they want,” Bargash said. “We’re getting every last one of them from Devils Backbone to Blue Ridge Breweries.”

Brickhouse Tavern plans to get acclimated to the JMU community by placing a giant Duke Dog statue at the front of its restaurant and sponsoring student organization activities such as Greek life philanthropy events. It also plans to use social media polls to plan weekend events like karaoke and open-mic nights for local bands, and to apply to be a FLEX merchant so JMU students can use their JACards for food purchases.

Bargash looks forward to bringing new traditions to Harrisonburg.

“It’s a home away from home for everybody,” Bargash said.

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No right way

Students and parents discuss the challenges of living life with left-hand dominance in a right-handed world

By SAMMY CRISCITELLO
The Breeze

While his right hand is raised, an incoming U.S. president takes the oath of office with his left hand placed on the Bible.

But wait, what about Barack Obama, Bill Clinton, George H. W. Bush, Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford? Five of the last seven U.S. presidents have taken this oath with their weaker hand raised.

Perhaps this statistic ends the age-old myth that lefties are inferior to righties. For instance, in the Latin language, the word “sinister” roughly translates to English as “in the left hand.”

So how does being left-handed come into play at JMU? For one of the baseball Dukes’ pitchers, being a part of this minority group helped him in a major way.

“Being left-handed helped me earn a spot on the varsity baseball team here at JMU,” Michael Evans, a junior engineering major, said. “There are less left-handed pitchers out there, so hitters have a hard time adjusting to the change.”

Of the 16 pitchers on JMU’s roster, Evans is one of just five lefties, and in 2015, he had the lowest ERA of them all. Ironically, Evans became a pitcher in the first place only because he was told he could no longer play a different position — because he was left-handed.

“I spent my first 10 years of playing baseball as a catcher, a position not traditionally played by left-handed people,” Evans said. “I was told I could no longer catch when I got to high school.”

When left-handed catchers attempt

a throw to third base, their momentum naturally carries them toward first base, making an accurate throw less likely. Unfortunately for lefties, disadvantages continue off the field and into the classroom.

According to Bill Wyatt, JMU’s senior director of communications and university spokesman, the university doesn’t keep track of the ratio of left-handed to right-handed desks, but lefty desks are scarce. In Harrison Hall, room 1261, of the 157 seats in the lecture hall, only 12 have the desk connected to the left arm of the chair. According to Chris Seeman, a sophomore marketing major, this inconvenience can distract from the lecture.

“I feel like it inconveniences both you and the people that are sitting to your left, because most people are right-handed, and I usually end up hitting elbows with somebody once or twice per class,” Seeman said.

While the number of lefty desks at JMU could potentially be fixed, there’s no foreseeable solution for lefties who struggle to write legibly with pen. When lefties write from left to right on paper, the bottom of their hand often smears the letters they just wrote.

“When I was writing thank you notes after my graduation party last year, I had to throw at least 10 letters in the trash because they were so smudged from dragging my left hand across,” Sam Drill, a freshman interdisciplinary liberal studies and mathematics double major, said.

Some may argue that left-handers are at a disadvantage not only in their physical ability to write, but also in their ability to process thoughts. The brain of

left-handers is organized in a different way than those of right-handers, and while the ramifications aren’t fully known, studies show a difference in each type’s process of thinking. Right-handers’ brains operate laterally, in which different functions are processed in each hemisphere. On the other hand, the brains of left-handers reveal greater cross-lateralization of function, in which both hemispheres are recruited to work on a given task.

“There is no clear unifying organizational pattern — the brains of left-handers individualize in a weird way,” Michael Hall, a psychology professor, said. “A lot of people tend to think of handedness as a genetic thing, but there can’t be a true left-handed gene because only 10 percent of the population throughout history is left-handed.”

Hall speculates that the consequences of the more varied and complex organization of pathways in the left-handed brain should reflect both advantages and disadvantages. For example, when processing thoughts, any requirement for additional lateral movement of neural activity across hemispheres relative to right-handers might slightly decrease processing efficiency. However, the speed of decision-making might be delayed by only tens of milliseconds. There might also possibly be observable differences in recovery of function following injury to one side of the brain.

“A right-hander [initially] could potentially have an entire function knocked out, whereas a left-hander



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LOREN PROBISH / THE BREEZE

In Harrison Hall, one class only has 12 left-handed desks as opposed to 145 right-handed desks. Left-handers often have to sit at an end seat.

Real student, reel reviews

Senior Jordan Butts reviews movies for popular blog



JILLIAN WRIGHT / THE BREEZE

Jordan Butts, a senior justice studies major and movie critic, posts his movie reviews on Jordan's Movie Guide.

By JILLIAN WRIGHT
The Breeze

While many students prefer staying in to watch Netflix movies to unwind after a long week, one student typically spends his Fridays in movie theaters.

Jordan Butts, a senior justice studies major, writes film reviews on his website Jordan's Movie Guide, with selections ranging from new releases such as "The Revenant" and "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" to classics like "The Lion King."

Butts first discovered his hobby in June 2015 after watching horror film "Insidious: Chapter 3" in theaters with a friend.

"We were talking about it afterwards, and I had some really strong opinions about the movie, and [my friends] said, 'Hey, you should start writing stuff like this because I think people would like to read it,'" Butts said. "So I started my own website and I've been doing it ever since."

Before launching his website, Butts, an aspiring police officer, spoke with a retired officer who offered advice about the significance of adopting a hobby outside the field.

"He was telling me, 'If this is what you end up doing, have something that you do on the side because you deal with bad stuff all the time,'" Butts said. "Something on the side will help you focus on that when you get home rather than taking work home with you."

For his early movie review posts, Butts wrote with a professional tone before noticing a need for change to better relate to his audience.

"When I started, I was a little bit more formal, and then I was like, 'You know, I don't like the way that that reads,' so now I try to keep it very laid-back," Butts said. "I'll throw jokes in there and things to make it enjoyable and entertaining to read rather than just laying the facts out."

In his Top 10 Mob Movies post, for instance, Butts ranked "Road to Perdition" No. 6 on the list, describing it as "another underrated film that features Tom Hanks as a mob hitman and he kills it (pun intended)."

Reviewing films that spark his interest, Butts aims to connect with his online readers on a relaxed, more personal level.

"Being a college student, I can't afford to see everything, but if there's something that looks interesting, I'll go and see it," Butts said. "I try to make posts like a conversation with a friend with what's good and bad about it, and keep it short, so people will know if they want to see it or not."

To help fund the costs of movie tickets and support his hobby, Butts' roommate, Greg Walker, a student at Mary Baldwin College, donates money through Patreon, a site that allows users to financially contribute to artists

and their work.

"When Jordan told me about his blog I knew he was exactly the kind of creator that Patreon was designed for," Walker said. "I send him \$6 a month using the site; as he accumulates small donations like this, Jordan and other creators like him will be able to continue to pursue their passions."

Along with friends and family, Butts' audience includes strangers, some outside the U.S., who actively engage with his reviews.

"I was surprised at how many people I don't know that read it and follow consistently," Butts said. "I've got people from all over the world who will read and comment on the posts that I make, which is really cool to me."

In regard to his website's audience responses, Butts said he thinks his conversational tone leaves readers more inclined to comment and follow.

Maryland resident Pat Sponaugle, a blogger dedicated to "Game of Thrones," said when reading Butts' review of seasons one through five of "Game of Thrones," he felt inspired to share his thoughts and opinions.

"I thought he did a great job outlining what he considered its strengths and weaknesses and I enjoyed his article enough to leave a comment," Sponaugle said. "It was casual and conversational and he was very gracious with his reply, which is always appreciated."

Having discovered an activity separate from his career goals in law enforcement, Butts plans to maintain the blog, posting reviews after graduation.

"I do hope I can continue doing this on the side," Butts said. "If I end up getting paid for writing movie reviews, whether it be through my website or somebody hiring me, then that would be my way of separating work and personal life."

According to Butts, his blog's audience engagement increased over time as he began to post more reviews.

"When I first started, it averaged around 10 hits per day and four or 500 per month. Overall I usually hover around 80 hits on the website each day and one to 2,000 per month," Butts said. "My most popular posts are either

my new movie reviews or top 10 lists- they usually get between 20 and 30 hits within the first few days and then expand from there."

With support from a growing audience, Butts seeks to continue reviewing films on his website not simply for himself but also for the benefit of his readers.

"I thought this was something I would do for a month and then get tired of it and nobody would read it," Butts said. "Then people started reading and enjoying it and it's expanded way past what I thought it was going to, so that keeps me going."

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"I've got people from all over the world who will read and comment on the posts."

Jordan Butts
senior justice studies
major and movie critic

LEFT | Left-handed students feel excluded

from page 8

might be a lot faster because they might have some of it duplicated on the other side of their head," Hall said.

Unfortunately for lefties, many people are unaware of the potential advantages in the abnormal neurological processes that come with left-handedness. Eun Hwangbo, the mother of sophomore SMAD major Koo Hwangbo, faced physical assault as a consequence of being left-handed.

"When I was growing up as a child in Korea, I only wrote with my left hand," Hwangbo said. "But when I started school, my teachers forbade writing left-handed. Any time they saw me writing with my left hand they would smack my hand with a ruler. Because of that conditioning I only write with my

right hand now."

For some lefties, giving in to the pressure to do things right-handed may come with advantages — such as improved coordination. Nick Schlegel, a junior business major, decided to experiment with using his right hand in sports and other activities, even though he writes left-handed. Today he considers himself ambidextrous.

"When I recently broke my left wrist, I was able to write with my right [hand] even though I had never done it before," Schlegel said. "I think it's easier for lefties to be ambidextrous because they've had to do things the righty way their whole life."

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LETTER | Obama responds to professor's letter questioning gun control

from front

"There's that one feeling of like, 'Wow, he really thought about what I wrote to him,'" Varner said. "The other feeling was that I wished that the situation never occurred that I would've had to write this letter."

Varner thought a lot about why his letter was one of the 10 that Obama chose to read. He believes that the professor side of the president came out since he answered the question at the end of the letter, "When my students ask what our leaders — leaders like you — are doing to help stop gun violence, what should I tell them?"

"I think that to some degree that is still very much a part of him," Varner said in reference to the president's teaching days. "I mean, I know he read to the end of the letter because he answered that question directly."

Not only did the president answer the question, but he told Varner to stay hopeful.

"Jay — Thank you for your letter, and your passion. Tell your students that their president won't stop doing everything he can to stop gun violence. And don't fill them with cynicism — change isn't easy, but it requires persistence and hope. Barack Obama"

Kathleen Mary Ferraiolo, a professor of political science, shares Varner's disappointment, and explains that gun violence is a serious problem faced today.

"There have been many attempts over the years to solve the problem that unfortunately have not been successful," Ferraiolo said. "I think it's fair to say President Obama is

frustrated with the lack of progress on this issue."

Varner still can't believe that the president wrote back, but he mainly views the experience as a major teaching point on the power of language.

"These are all the things I teach in class," Varner said. "How do you catch somebody's attention, how do you motivate them to continue reading and how do you communicate effectively and passionately what it is you want to say?"

Cathryn Molloy, a WRTC professor, strongly believes that communicating effectively and clearly will often lead to a response.

"We are responsible for judicious uses of language," Molloy said. "We should certainly speak out when we feel passionate about things."

Varner stresses that this letter should be a message to everyone that they have a voice in this country.

"I can tell you this much, that I wrote to the president and he wrote back," Varner said. "Taking action, being engaged citizens in some way, expressing yourself, learning how to communicate effectively, I mean that's not only helpful for school and classes and a job, but as citizens of a country."

Obama's handwritten letter will forever be treasured by Varner.

"That message of keeping hope and not being cynical, which is so easy to do, that's something valuable to hear," Varner said. "Change is slow, things like this take time and commitment."

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Yes she 'Does'

Chelsea Handler's new four-episode series is a hilarious success



COURTESY OF TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Chelsea Handler was hired by Netflix after leaving E! Network in 2014.

By ASHLEIGH BALSAMO
The Breeze

Netflix
"Chelsea Does"
★★★★☆
Starring Chelsea Handler
Released Jan. 23, 2016

If you're anything like me and have felt like something's been missing in your life ever since "Chelsea Lately" ended in August 2014, fear not. Author, comedian and hilariously offensive TV personality Chelsea Handler is back and fresher than ever in her new four-part Netflix docuseries "Chelsea Does."

"Chelsea Does" follows Handler as she researches four topics she considers herself to know little to nothing about: marriage, Silicon Valley, racism and drugs. Each hour-ish long episode begins with Handler sitting around a table with a group of her peers, including but not limited to Khloe Kardashian, Margaret Cho and Michael McDonald, while discussing the topic in a completely uncensored way. This rawness and honesty is one of the best parts about the series as a whole.

As she researches new technology or tries to understand why anyone would want to get married, Handler's personality never wavers. When she doesn't understand something, you know. When she thinks something's stupid, there's no hiding it with her signature eye-rolls and sarcastic comments.

Handler is unapologetically herself, which is the overall purpose of the documentary.

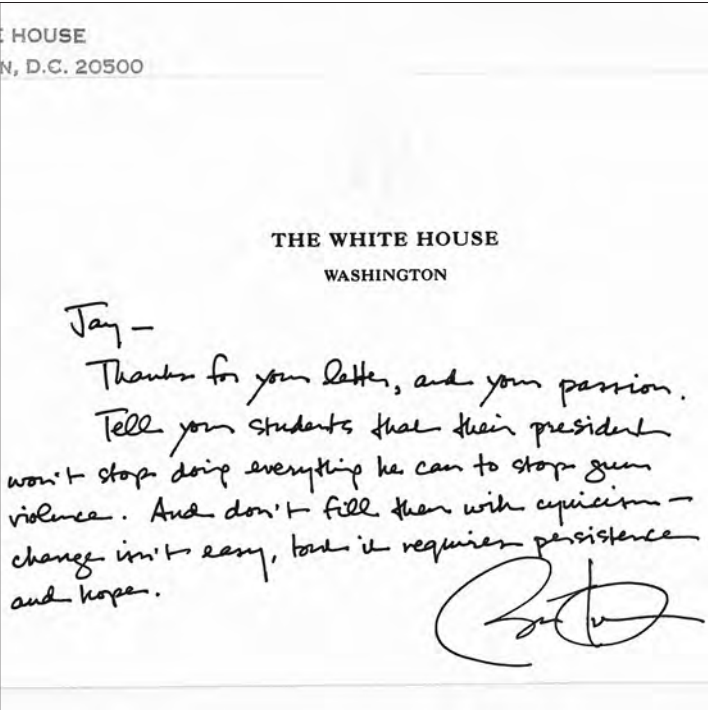
As someone who's been a TV personality for years and is no stranger to public criticism, Handler goes out and experiences life the only way she knows how — as honestly and authentically as possible.

What sets this docuseries apart is Handler's ability to embrace her lack of knowledge about these topics. She knows that she has no idea what she's talking about, which is why she's seeking out information in the first place. She talks with notable figures in minority groups to try to understand racism, a topic unfamiliar to a white woman. She works with app creators in Silicon Valley because she believes she's technologically challenged and wants to make things easier for other people like herself. She talks to couples who believe in forever love because she doesn't see marriage as a possibility in her future. This is completely relatable, because let's face it — no one can possibly know everything, and sometimes, the information we do have is wrong.

Handler approaches these topics with a fresh, open mindset and uses her ignorance and comedic relief to dumb everything down to layman's terms, making it easy for viewers to crank through each episode in one sitting. I laughed hysterically more than once (especially when Handler interviews elementary-aged children on their adorable marriage views), but I also re-evaluated my views on each topic, which, if you ask me, is a sign that a documentary is successful.

While some might view "Chelsea Does" as insensitive or nothing but "a lot of filler," according to Variety.com, I think she took a risk by putting herself out there and it's definitely paying off. After all, what's life without a little risk?

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COURTESY OF JAY VARNER

President Obama told Professor Varner to remind students not to give up hope.



Weekend warriors



CONNOR WOISARD / THE BREEZE

Redshirt senior shortstop Chad Carroll fields a ground ball last weekend against Bucknell University at Veterans Memorial Park. Carroll has scored five runs this season.

JMU will look to get on the right track against the University of Maryland, Baltimore County

By **MATT WEYRICH**
The Breeze

Coming off its 2-1 win over George Washington University Tuesday, JMU baseball (3-5) will host the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (1-7) in a three-game series this weekend. UMBC has lost seven straight while the Dukes themselves have struggled, dropping four of their last five.

JMU stole a victory Tuesday in Arlington, Virginia, after scoring two runs in the seventh and eighth innings to top George Washington University (3-5). Head coach Marlin Ikenberry was impressed with the way his team fought.

"I was really excited about how we grinded out that win," Ikenberry said. "We made a lot of mistakes early in the game and our guys bounced back. It was a really good road win to pick up for us."

Meanwhile, UMBC hasn't been able to get into the win column since taking its season opener against the Virginia Military Institute (5-4). Prior to the season, the retrievers had high expectations after their most successful campaign in school history. UMBC finished the year 34-20 and reached the America East Championship

game for the first time ever.

"I am excited about how far we have come in a short period of time," UMBC head coach Bob Mumma said on the UMBC athletics website. "The goal now is to win a regular season title and earn a spot in the conference tournament every year."

Unfortunately for UMBC, the season hasn't gone according to plan. The team has allowed at least six runs in five of its last seven games, while scoring no more than two in four straight contests.

With the Retrievers left looking for answers, one might think JMU is heading into the weekend series with an air of confidence in the clubhouse.

"We just need to focus on what we can do," senior starting left-handed pitcher Aaron Hoover said. "We can't get caught up in what the other team is doing."

The Dukes will need all the focus they can get, with the team struggling in nearly every aspect of the game. JMU allowed five homers in its series at Clemson University last weekend, giving up six runs or more in all three games. The Dukes have struggled defensively as well, averaging one error per game so far this season.

But JMU has been successful on the basepaths, swiping 15 bases through the first eight games. Redshirt senior shortstop Chad Carroll and junior outfielder Ky Parrott lead the way for the Dukes with four steals apiece. However, UMBC has thrown out 42 percent of runners attempting to steal in 2016, making the running game an intriguing aspect of this weekend's series.

Carroll stands out on the JMU roster as the player to watch out for, having posted a .353/.371/.412 slash line with two doubles and five runs scored through eight starts at leadoff. In the UMBC dugout, redshirt junior starting pitcher Riley Stephenson will be looking to continue his success after recording a 1.46 ERA to go along with seven strikeouts in his first two starts.

After their season last year that resulted in an 18-33 record and a coaching change, the Dukes are looking to bounce back from last year and start off the season on the right foot before things get out of hand.

The series opener will start at 3 p.m. Friday at Veterans Memorial Park.

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Secret behind the success

Women's basketball team trains against a men's practice squad

By **MATT TYSON**
The Breeze

Down on the basketball court, these athletes bring their A-game to every practice at the JMU Convocation Center. Their only motivation is to help bring home another victory for the Dukes, but they aren't your typical JMU team. These are the male practice players of the women's basketball team.

The idea behind using the practice players, which is a typical practice in women's college basketball, is to help the Dukes prepare for future games by simulating the schemes of opposing teams. Their strength and power also helps the team to work harder and challenge one another.

"Coach Brooks has been using this system as long as he's been here," Tim Clark, the director of women's basketball operations, said. "It's very helpful."

If the team's performance this season is any indication, then the guys must be doing a great job. The Dukes are currently sitting on top of the Colonial Athletic Association standings at 16-1 and are 23-5 overall.

The group currently consists of about 12 students of various ages and backgrounds, but one thing they all have in common is a love for and understanding of basketball. It's Clark's job to figure out who fits this description and who'll work well with the team.

"I'll send out emails, go to freshman orientation and go to UREC and just watch who's playing pick-up games," Clark said.

There are no official tryouts, but that's something that usually takes care of itself. There's a lot of paperwork and medical information that potential players need to go through.

"That's usually a good way to weed out the ones who aren't as committed," Clark said.

While the male practice players have an important role to fill during practice, that doesn't mean that they aren't allowed to have a little fun. One of the group's motivating factors is the incentive board. Each player has a certain amount of points and can earn more.

These points, however, mean absolutely nothing and are just about bragging rights. A lot of the players also receive nicknames, usually assigned by assistant coach Jennifer Brown. Inside jokes aside, the guys just enjoy getting to play with the team.

"I love it, it's honestly great," said Philemon Viennas, a freshman business management major popularly known on the team as Wolverine. "I played basketball in high school, but it's totally different out here with D-I athletes."

Just because they only play at practices doesn't mean the players don't have to put in some hard



ALEXIS MILLER / THE BREEZE

JMU women's basketball head coach Kenny Brooks instructs the men's practice squad on Tuesday afternoon.

work. New players quickly find out after their first day that working with the Dukes is no walk in the park, something practice team veterans understand.

"They're hoopers for sure; it's always good to run against them," said Walker Aspinwall, a junior business major and three-year member of the practice team. "We'll jump in five-on-five with them, we'll do position splits with them. We really do get in the mix of things."

While there's no official all-time record kept of wins and losses, it's safe to say the women's team usually emerges the victor. However, every now and again some magic happens and the guys pull out a win.

"We had one time where we did really well," said sophomore kinesiology major Clay Harris, who is currently one of the incentive board's leaders. "Everything else is either really tight or we lose."

It's those times when the practice players do too well against the Dukes that women's head coach Kenny Brooks can get a little angry at his team. According to Clark, this anger is nothing compared

to what Brooks would do if one of the practice players went too hard during a practice and injured one his players.

"I shudder to think what would happen," Clark said with a smile.

Thankfully for both the team and the practice players, this has yet to happen. Instead, both sides get to enjoy having a harmonious working relationship.

"We all have the same goal, which is for them to get better," Jaamir Bumbrey, a senior sport and recreation management major, said.

There are plenty of workouts, lots of jokes and playful jibes at one another during scrimmages and drills. In the end, the practice team players are just glad that they are getting an opportunity to help the team improve.

"We're proud of it honestly," Ben Munsey, a junior kinesiology major, said. "Just being able to be a part of what they're trying to create is pretty rewarding."

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CAA | Brady: 'I fully expect this game to go down to the wire.'

from front

history doesn't repeat itself.

"We won that game [against William & Mary] but we still didn't play to our best level," senior guard Ron Curry said. "We just gotta fine tune some things and we'll be fine; we know what the stakes are so our focus is a little bit sharper."

Brady said how beating a team in back-to-back games is one of the toughest things in sports and is confident that the Tribe is going to come out playing their best basketball on Saturday.

"There's a few things that we think they can do defensively, but we have to make sure that they don't catch us off guard," Brady said. "We need more contributions from other guys, we need more guys to step up and make some plays and make some baskets."

The Dukes have been plagued with injuries all season long. Junior forward Yohanny Dalember missed time at the beginning of the season with a meniscus tear in his left knee. Curry also missed a game during conference play due to a knee injury.

While both Dalember and Curry have since returned to the lineup, there are still two big names missing. Junior forward Dimitrije Cabarkapa broke his right hand in practice on Feb. 9 and has yet to return to game action. Before getting injured, Cabarkapa was averaging 17 minutes off the bench, while contributing 10 points per game.

Brady is hopeful the Serbian-native will be back in the lineup for the quarterfinal game, but he is skeptical of the contributions he can make.

"The issue with Dimitrije is, 'Will his hand swell up after being on the court for an hour?'" Brady said. "That's something we have to monitor every day."

Junior guard Shakir Brown injured his toe in last Thursday's game against Towson University. Brown has been an integral part to JMU's success this season, starting 23 contests and averaging 11.3 points per game.

Brown didn't practice on Monday and Brady noted that the forward will be day-to-day leading up to Saturday's game.

One of the big stories of the 2015 season has been the emergence of sophomore guard Joey McLean. The Greensboro, North Carolina, native came onto the scene and has proven to be a dynamic all around player. McLean hit a trio of big shots this season in games against Radford University, the College of Charleston and William & Mary to seal victories for the Dukes down the stretch. On top of his shot-making ability, McLean significantly improved his defensive play and proved to be one of the top young guards in the CAA.

"He's still a younger basketball player and his role has really changed," Brady said. "Whether he starts or comes off the bench he realizes his significance to the team. He gives us a second ball handler and is a second guy that can be a defensive threat on the perimeter."

McLean had six points and five assists in the win over the Tribe. His work ethic, quickness and athleticism led him to the success that he's had this season, but he notes that it will take more than that to defeat the Tribe again.

"It's very tough to beat a team twice in a row, because they know what you're going to do," McLean said. "It's all about who wants it more and who's going to work harder. It's not going to be an easy win for either one of us."

The Dukes made 50 percent of their shots from the field in the win over the Tribe, and netted 36 percent of their shots from beyond the arc. The conference-leading three-point defense was in full effect on Saturday as the Tribe made only four of their 24 attempts.

Brady is confident with his team's game plan going into this second game and noted that there are likely only small adjustments to be made for either team.

"We're comfortable with our gameplan against William & Mary; they're probably not going to change much, but what we think they're going to do more of we're prepared to defend," Brady said.

Saturday's game tips off at 1 p.m. at Royal Farms Arena.

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Brooks signs for more years

Contract extension binds coach through Spring 2019

In a deal that wasn't initially publicized, JMU gave Kenny Brooks, the women's basketball head coach, a two-year contract extension in September. The Daily News-Record reported the deal Wednesday and obtained the information through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Brooks currently makes \$225,340 each season and this deal won't make any changes to that salary, but it does extend the contract through April 24, 2019.

A former standout point guard for the JMU men's team, Brooks added to his legacy as a Duke by becoming the winningest coach in school history with a victory last February against the University of Delaware. Brooks has led the Dukes to a 333-121 record over 14 seasons and a 23-5 record this season.

Under Brooks, JMU has experienced unprecedented success as they've reached postseason play in the last 10 seasons and won at least 24 games in all of those seasons. The Dukes clinched the No. 1 seed in this year's CAA tournament by winning the regular season title, which guarantees them a spot in at least the Women's National Invitational Tournament and extends their streak to 11 straight seasons with a postseason appearance.

With the new extension, Brooks' deal will keep him in Harrisonburg through the junior season of his daughter Kendyl, a recent JMU commit.

The Dukes have a first-round bye in the CAA tournament and begin play on March 10 at noon in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

-staff report

DOUBLE TAKE

NFL COMBINE

A multi-million dollar media fiasco

By **PETER CAGNO**
The Breeze

Alas, it's that time of year again. The NFL offseason. No professional offseason is as publicized as the NFL's. And for what reason? The entire nine-month ordeal has since turned into a gigantic media frenzy that has analysts and reporters trying to predict which players will go to which team in the upcoming draft on April 28.

With the draft being the climax of the offseason, many would say that the most exciting part of it all is the NFL Scouting Combine, which is held every February at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana. The combine hosts 300 of the best college football players in the country on an invite-only basis. How prestigious. There, the athletes compete in various drills that test their speed, strength, agility and football IQ.

Sure there's a lot of data that can be retrieved from the combine results, but they're mostly unimportant numbers that rarely affect a prospect's draft order. Most of the top, potential first-rounders are already being scouted by specific team's owners, general managers and coaches who are merely using the combine results to confirm what they already know. Most of these players have already had countless phone calls, meetings and other interactions with NFL executives before they even got to the combine.

Take Joey Bosa, the defensive end from Ohio State University. He has mystified coaches and analysts alike with his performance in college and we've seen his potential draft number fluctuate this past week during the combine. Regardless of how many times he can bench press 225 pounds (which is still probably a lot), or how fast he can run the

40-yard dash, it'll likely have little effect on his draft order, since we'll probably see him go in the top 10 of the first round.

On the other hand, some players can benefit greatly from performing well in the combine. Take the offensive tackle from Indiana University, Jason Spriggs. Spriggs turned heads at the combine this year as he performed well above he was expected to. The massive 6-foot-6-inch tall Spriggs weighed in at 301 pounds and posted an offensive lineman best 40-yard dash time at 4.94 seconds. The Hoosier also cranked out 31 reps on the 225-pound bench press, one less than leader Stephane Nembot from the University of Colorado. While these results probably won't slate Spriggs in the top 10, he greatly improved his chances to go in the first round after showcasing his incredible agility and strength.

In addition to the drills and workouts that the players undergo, a tantamount part of the combine is the medical examinations. This is where the players can be examined by teams of trainers from each NFL team to make sure there are no injuries lingering or any athletic limitations. Jaylon Smith, a standout University of Notre Dame linebacker, injured his knee in the first quarter of the Fiesta Bowl on New Year's Day. Prior to the injury, Smith was a surefire top-10 pick, but after further medical examinations revealed ankle and nerve damage, Smith will likely drop further down the draft board, costing him millions of dollars.

All things considered, the NFL combine has ultimately turned into a gigantic media event characterized by a myriad of superfluous reports from journalists, but there are some serious implications that can come with an athlete's performance at the combine, including millions of dollars.

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Work ethic trumps physical attributes

By **WILL THOMPSON**
The Breeze

The dust has finally settled around Super Bowl 50. Less than a month after being crowned world champions, the Denver Broncos and 31 other NFL teams begin to look ahead to Super Bowl 51, some starting earlier than others. And with a new season on the horizon, new hope is brought to each team's fanbase.

Questions of free agency, draft picks, moves and trades have circled the NFL world constantly over the past month and some action is finally starting to take place for thirsty NFL fans. This past week, the NFL concluded it's annually televised NFL Combine at Lucas Oil Stadium in downtown Indianapolis. For those of you unaware, the combine is an over-hyped workout for NFL hopefuls that receives wall-to-wall attention from various networks during the week while countless armchair general managers go crazy over meaningless stats and data. Many people see the combine as a combination of calculated risks supported by hard evidence; I see it as a more of a crapshoot.

I mean, really, the idea that there's a significant way to determine how well a player will do at the next level simply based on arbitrary data is blasphemous. I get it: 40-yard dash times, bench reps and all of the other drills these players do at the combine give you an idea of how well a player will do physically. But even after all is said and

done, there's no way to know for sure. Take Houston Texans linebacker Jadeveon Clowney for example. The No. 1 overall pick of the 2014 draft was physically one of the most magnificent specimens the NCAA has ever seen. Fast-forward two years later and what do we get? A combined 47 tackles and 4.5 sacks in 17 total games played over two years. Seven years earlier we get another NCAA phenom, JaMarcus Russell, selected No. 1 overall in the 2007 draft, yet he doesn't even play in the league anymore.

So yes, there are ways to get a general idea of how well a player is going to do out of college as evidenced by the Cam Newtons and the Andrew Luck of the NFL. But, in reality, there's a very, very slim chance all of these guys pan out.

Meanwhile, guys like Tom Brady have some of the worst statistical combine numbers and turn out to win four Super Bowls. The bottom line is, national coverage of a workout for athletes who haven't proven anything at the next level is a little extreme. Every year, coaches, GMs and fans alike are swindled by arbitrary data, and every year fans are disappointed. I've come to the conclusion that the best players are usually the ones who'll work as hard as they can to be the best. So, this year, take the combine predictions with a little more than a grain of salt, and just hope that your favorite team picks the dedicated guy.

CONTACT Will Thompson at thompsswe@dukes.jmu.edu.

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Best of the 'Burg 2016

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Best of the 'Burg 2016

Readers recently voted in our annual Best of the 'Burg survey on our website to pick their favorites in 20 categories. The votes are in and counted, and here we present this year's winners and the stories behind several of them. Find more stories online at breezejmu.org.



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Best of the 'Burg winners

Best place to grab coffee Greenberry's
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Best place to take a date Clementine Cafe
Best food truck Grilled Cheese Mania
Best day trip spot Skyline Drive
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Best pizza slice Benny Sorrentino's
Best dessert Kline's Dairy Bar
Best barbershop/salon The Studio Hair Salon
Best trivia night Clementine Cafe
Best campus hangout TDU
Best campus food E-Hall
Best outdoor hangout the Quad
Best snow day activity Sledding

An icon, explained

The Quad has a history dating back to 1909, when the first buildings were constructed on campus

By **KAYLA RINI**
The Breeze

The Quad, with its Bluestone buildings and brick pathways, is an iconic JMU feature. Unknown to many is the history of how the Quad came to be.

According to Dennis Blanton an assistant professor of anthropology, the Quad has gone through quite a transformation. Its formation evolved along with the State Normal and Industrial School for Women in 1908, which was then renamed to Madison College, and finally, to JMU in 1977.

The first two buildings on campus were Science Hall — now Maury Hall, which contained the library, the registrar, classrooms, the president’s office, the bookstore and the gym — and Jackson Hall, which was the first dormitory.

“Before the Quad as it is now, it used to be all farmland,” Blanton said. “The farm family, the Newmans, lived in a cottage where Moody Hall is located.”

According to Blanton, Newman was a prominent person in town as his family had lived in the Shenandoah Valley since the 18th century.

“He didn’t sell all of his land, only 42 acres of his property to the state, and that’s what became the initial JMU,” Blanton said.

The Newmans’ cottage, according to Blanton, was used by the university for the first president, Julian Burruss, and then became a faculty and student home where the building had three apartments for faculty and housed nine students.

“During 1918, the residential hall transformed into an infirmary mainly during the Spanish influenza,” Blanton said. “The house became a focal point to fend off the flu, as it was such a devastating time for young people who were affected by it.”



Best
Outdoor
Hangout

Best of the
— 'Burg —

COURTESY OF MARGARET MULROONEY

The last building constructed on the Quad was Wilson Hall, completed in 1931. The Quad has a detailed history includes a time when Moody Hall was transformed into an infirmary during the Spanish flu.

According to Margaret Mulrooney, associate vice provost for university programs and a history professor, the Quad’s formation was based off European universities.

“Quadrangles are common elements in campus landscapes,” Mulrooney said in an email. “There’s Harvard yard with all four sides, and at U. Va the fourth side’s open, which symbolizes an open, more democratic republic.”

The state hired architect Charles Robinson, who used that idea for construction of the Quad. According to Blanton, the landscape surrounding the Quad was so rough and hilly when the college was built that wooden walkways were constructed.

“The women walked on an entire network of raised boardwalks all over the Quad,” Blanton said. “Nothing like the brick pathways that are there now.”

JMU’s second president, Samuel Duke, was nicknamed “Duke the Builder” because of his ambitious idea to level out the Quad.

“The process was called ‘cut and fill,’ and they took soil from higher points of the area to the lower points,” Blanton said. “If you look carefully today, you can see terraces amongst the Quad’s landscape.”

According to Mulrooney, as the student population grew, more buildings were added, mainly dorms and classrooms.

Keezell Hall housed a pool and gym, while Varner House was for women to study home economics. The last building constructed was Wilson Hall, which was finished in 1931. Harrison Hall contained the library and dining hall, and tunnels were created for steam pipes to heat the buildings.

“I believe tunnels also extend from Harrison to Ashby,” Mulrooney said. “Most of the fabled tunnels are just crawl spaces for pipes, but the ones from Jackson are real tunnels and the source of much mystery.”

Some of the Quad’s dorms are named after Confederate officers and generals, such as Jackson Hall, named for Confederate general Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson and Maury Hall, for Confederate Navy Admiral Matthew Fontaine Maury.

“There is a lot to be said about the decision to honor Confederate memory and what scholars call the ‘Lost Cause’ at a time when Jim Crow segregation was rooting itself into the fabric of American life everywhere,” Mulrooney said.

The “Lost Cause” refers to an interpretation of the Civil War that presents it from the Confederate

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Local salon aims to better staff with unique training

By **NICOLETTE CHUSS**
The Breeze

Voted best salon for a sixth time, The Studio Hair Salon & Day Spa continues to serve the Harrisonburg community with its assortment of hair styling and pampering services. Judi Crawford is the woman behind the booming business and has come a long way from her days as a student at Denard's Beauty College, a former Harrisonburg institution.

"I did not have a background in hairstyling," Crawford said. "But as I grew and as I failed as a stylist, my thirst for wanting to get better, wanting to know how to run a company ... and how to keep it on top really grew."

She bought the salon from her former manager in 1980 and has continued to improve The Studio ever since.

Throughout the years, Crawford has instituted a unique level system so that her customers receive the most professional, quality services while her associates can continue to learn and grow in their careers.

"We are a training and teaching salon, and if you want to come to work for me, you have to go through my training system," Crawford said.

Those fresh out of Crawford's nine-month training program enter the floor as a level one hairdresser and typically provide styling services to an average of 90 guests per month.

As their number of clients grows and time becomes more valuable, a stylist will progress through the system. Eventually, they reach a level four status, with the expectation to see 150 to 180 clients each month. At

this top level, Crawford wants stylists to share their expertise and journey through the level system with the new associates. This advisory component ensures that stylists continue to work hard toward providing excellence.

"I want to grow a career and I want professionalism," Crawford said. "If you're at that top level, I don't want you to get stagnant."

Even after 14 years at The Studio, level four stylist Elizabeth Burton continues to improve.

"The salon has helped me to grow not only as a stylist, but as a person," Burton said. "Every day is a new adventure and allows me to continuously be creative."

The compassion and amount of consideration that Crawford puts into each aspect of her job has influenced employees and customers for years, including her daughter Ally Robertson, who is The Studio salon's coordinator.

"I felt so much a part of the company that she began and I wanted to help grow people with similar passions," Robertson said.

Along with her mom, Robertson hopes to continue to spread excellence and passion in beauty services throughout The Studio.

"I believe in my co-workers, I believe in the industry and I believe in community," Robertson said. "I love the business part of The Studio ... and helping out our community so we can all go on living happily and enjoying life."

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When opportunity comes knocking

Pale Fire Brewing Co. owners reflect on their first year in business

Best
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Winery

Best of the
'Burg



MARSHAL RIGGS / THE BREEZE

LEFT Patrons enjoy the mellow, laid-back atmosphere of Pale Fire Brewing Co. in the Ice House in downtown Harrisonburg. **RIGHT** Pale Fire has brewing equipment on site to brew large amounts of beer.

By **PETER CAGNO**
The Breeze

When Tim Brady and Jamie Long started Pale Fire Brewing Co. in April 2015, they had a clear mission: to brew great craft beer and have fun in the process.

Both graduates of JMU — Brady in 2002 and Long in 2007 — the duo got their respective starts in the industry by working locally and building experience along the way.

Following graduation, Brady began working as an assistant brewer at Calhoun's Restaurant & Brewing Co. on Court Square in Harrisonburg, which has since closed. He remained in that role from 2002 until 2008.

"That was a great learning experience," Brady said. "It was a two-man team so I kind of learned a bit of everything."

Brady then began working as a beer distributor for Specialty Beverage of Virginia where he sold craft beer to bars and restaurants all over Virginia, including Harrisonburg. That's where his relationship with Long began to develop.

"I was buying beer for Jack Brown's and Clementine's, and Tim [Brady] was working with Specialty, so we got to know each other that way," Long said.

Long also worked as a bartender and bar manager at Clementine's, and following his graduation he decided to take a more formal approach to the beer brewing business.

Long opted out of attending law school and decided to go to brewing school instead. Long attended the Siebel Institute of Technology in Chicago, where he studied the fundamentals of craft brewing from world-class brewers. From there he went on to work an apprenticeship with Starr Hill Brewery in Crozet, Virginia.

After about six months of learning and mastering the craft of brewing, Long then got a job with Flying Dog Brewery in Frederick, Maryland, where he assumed the role of lead brewer, managed a team of brewers and worked in research and development.

Long got his start in craft brewing by brewing homemade beer with his father in Culpeper, Virginia.

"I used to go home to my dad's and started home brewing with him," Long said. "From there it sort of evolved into a passion and a drive to do that as a career."

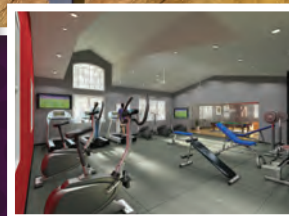
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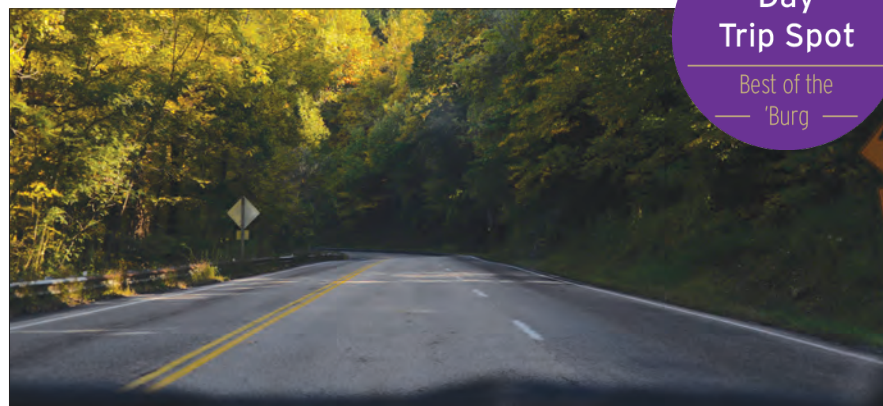
Driving with a view

Skyline Drive offers scenic views just a quick trip away from campus. With warm temperatures around the corner, the numerous overlooks are sure to draw you in for a day of adventures with nature.

Photos by Loren Probish | *The Breeze*

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Nothing's sweeter than Clementine

MARK OWEN / THE BREEZE

MATT MURPHY | *The Breeze*

Tuesday night trivia is a downtown favorite

It's the atmosphere; the warm seating area that invites you in to enjoy lunch with a friend, or a drink while you work on your computer. Another part of it is the food, which are some of the best entrees available downtown.

But for many, the reason Clementine Cafe is such a great place to visit is the trivia.

Every Tuesday evening, teams gather to face off in the ultimate battle of wits, some good ol' general knowledge trivia. The main floor of the restaurant only serves up half the action as crowds fill up the downstairs lounge

as well. Part of the fun is listening to the occasional score recaps to hear the creative team names — there are always some hilarious ones. The questions are always unique and sure to provide a challenge even to the most seasoned trivia vet.

Enjoying a beer with your friends at Clementine on these nights is one of the best ways to spend your Tuesday evening and is a relaxing setting to take a break from the bustling workweek. Get there early since seats fill up quickly and get ready to have your brain pushed to its limit.

GRACE BLACKBURN | *caffeinated concepts*

The perfect romantic night for two

Whether you're on your first date or your 100th, Clementine Cafe is a restaurant sure to spark conversation. As soon as you walk in the door, you're engulfed by its colors — the splattered paint on the wall behind the stage, the cool blue of the bar lights, the bright pop of local artwork hanging on the walls (and even one painting on the ceiling).

In this comfortable environment, you can enjoy a date with no pressure. The wait staff isn't intrusive, the menu is refined but not pricey (the most expensive entree is \$17) and the exposed brick and visible pipes on the ceiling give the restaurant an unfinished but homey feel. You and your date can feel at ease in the relaxed artsy atmosphere and not have to try too hard to impress each other.

That's to say nothing of the food; Clementine's menu offers options to all palettes. If you want to eat light on a first date, there's a selection of salads, or the entree section boasts a wide selection of dishes from pork to steak to fish. Even vegetarians are included — there's a variety of vegetarian appetizers, a tofu entree and two kinds of veggie burgers. I had the falafel burger, which was delicious with its perfect blend of spices and the homemade tomato relish on top.

If you want to impress a date without breaking the bank, take them to Clementine. Its colorful interior is welcoming to everyone, and its inclusive menu will keep you coming back.

CONTACT Matt Murphy and Grace Blackburn at breezeopinion@gmail.com.

BREWERY | Owners hope to inspire creativity in everyone

from page 5

Long also said that his father was anything but disappointed when he decided not to become a lawyer.

"He was ecstatic," Long said. "He definitely thought I'd make a better brewer than a lawyer."

Working in the local brewing industry led Brady and Long to develop a working relationship and eventually a friendship that would lead to becoming business partners. The two had often joked about potentially opening a brewery together. Opportunity eventually came knocking for them when they were approached about a vacancy in the Ice House in downtown Harrisonburg, where the building developers were looking for a brewery.

"I think when we started to realize that we might be able to put Pale Fire together was when we were approached about this space in the Ice House," Brady said. "The building developers saw the popularity of craft beer in Harrisonburg and knew that they wanted a brewery as a cornerstone business of their development."

The Ice House is an 80,000-square-foot former industrial ice factory. Brady said that the space is ideal for a brewery.

"What people don't realize is that a brewery needs industrial infrastructure," Brady said. "The floors back here were built to handle industry. We have a loading dock, all of the non-glamorous things, but you can't have a brewery like ours unless you have those things."

And thus, last April, Pale Fire Brewing Co. was born. The name may seem simple, but it's anything but.

"Basically the concept is that creativity inspires creativity in others," Brady said. "All of the beer we make and the name Pale Fire comes from creativity that's inspired us, and our creative output is our beer."

The name Pale Fire comes from a book by Russian author Vladimir Nabokov, who in turn borrowed the term from a play titled "Timon of Athens" by William Shakespeare.

"Nabokov was inspired by Shakespeare, and we were inspired by that creativity," Brady said. "We express our creativity through brewing and hopefully we'll inspire others."

It's been close to a year since Pale Fire opened and the owners have seen their fare share of trials and tribulations.

"The toughest thing for us starting out was

trying to figure out a production schedule, since we have no prior basis of how much we needed," Brady said.

Pale Fire aims to produce about 3,500 barrels of beer annually. Each barrel equates to 31 gallons of beer. Right now, Pale Fire only distributes beer by the keg, which is about half a barrel at 15.5 gallons.

The duo hopes to evolve from keg distribution to bottles on shelves in retail stores.

"Our next big step as a business is putting in a bottling line and having six-packs out there," Brady said. "The first two we're going to package are our Deadly Rhythm American pale ale and Salad Days, our American saison."

Money can be an issue in the brewing world, as much of the machinery is expensive, making the industry very capital intensive. Grassroots and quality control are two staples of Pale Fire's philosophy, that's why the owners want to have their own packaging equipment on site.

"Our biggest emphasis, in addition to making unique styles, is quality," Long said. "We want to make sure we have our hands on it, have all the control, we definitely want to have our own equipment."

While Pale Fire doesn't currently have a kitchen, and there are no plans in the future to ever have one, it still offers unique opportunities for patrons to get their grub on while enjoying craft beer. Customers can order food from either Food.Bar.Food across the street or Pure Eats next door and have the food delivered to the tap room.

"There's so many good chefs out there, and within three blocks of here there's 15 restaurants I'd be happy to eat at," Brady said. "We're much better brewers and they're much better chefs, so the guest is much better served in that relationship."

The owners said that they're still currently basking in the fanfare of being a new and unique spot in Harrisonburg, but are nothing but optimistic for the future.

"It's always good to remind ourselves that as important as Pale Fire is to us and how much work we put into it, there's still 50,000 people in this city and it would be easy to assume that everybody has heard of us," Brady said. "But there's still plenty of craft beer fans who haven't heard of us yet, so we have to keep spreading the word."

CONTACT Peter Cagno at breesesports@gmail.com.



ALEXIS MILLER / THE BREEZE

Taylor Down Under opened in October of 1995. Students, professors and faculty members alike use the spot that offers many different features and activities.

Located on the lowest level of Madison Union, Taylor Down Under is voted the Best Campus Hangout spot

By **RICHIE BOZEK**
The Breeze

Finding somewhere to play games, listen to live music, showcase and observe student art, host an event, grab a snack or just kick back to relax or get some work done all in one place seems a bit far-fetched, right?

At JMU, not so much. Taylor Down Under is an anomalous location where all this is possible.

This diverse space is located on the lowest level of Madison Union, which is surrounded by Philips Hall (Top Dog/PC Dukes), the commons and the Hillside Field, and is winner of this year's "Best of the 'Burg" Best Hangout on JMU's campus.

"I think [TDU] is a lot of things for a lot of different people," Director of University Unions Dave Barnes said. "We've created a real sense of, 'This is my place,' kind of feel."

TDU is home to seven pool tables, a lounge area with overstuffed couches, tables and chairs, an Auntie Anne's pretzel shop and a small performance stage equipped with audio and lights that hosts Open Mic Night on Tuesdays and Tunes at Noon on Fridays. There's also a cove of reclining chairs, a computer workstation and a checkout desk where students can rent out iPads and games. Framed along the walls are featured student photography and artwork.

The space is very much a student sandbox, built off student requests and always evolving and adapting to students' trends and wants.

"Almost everything in the last 20 years that's [been] down there have come from student initiatives, and that's what makes it great," Barnes said. "All we've done is make it

happen. I think if we had been left with just those of us that are administrators, our vision of [TDU] probably would've been a lot less."

When Barnes began working at JMU in 1993, his first responsibility was to open Taylor Hall, now known as Madison Union. For the most part, it was a pass-through with a few pool tables, a video arcade where Auntie Anne's is now stationed, and it also housed the Off Campus Life office.

Barnes knew his office wanted to create a student hangout area at JMU, especially after visiting West Virginia University's hangout space, the "Mountainlair." Barnes' office then formed focus groups of orientation assistants, and discovered that students wanted a space similar to the "Central Perk" in "Friends." This led to TDU opening in 1995.

When the hall first opened, TDU's space wasn't nearly as ornate and occupied as it is today.

"When we first built it in October of '95, it was after the school year had started and nobody really came to find it, we didn't use it at all," Barnes said. "It wasn't until the following summer that we used it during orientation ... it instantly became successful because they just assumed it was there for them, which it was, and they used it."

Instead of couches, there were futons. All of the tables and chairs were old ones from Dining Services and were painted black, which allowed students to paint on them, a tradition that still stands today. About every four years, chairs in TDU are raffled off to various students and student organizations. Also, instead of Auntie Anne's, or the previous Java City, there was a coffee cart.

As the years passed, TDU continued to evolve. The futons

turned into couches, the coffee cart led to Java City and later Auntie Anne's. About 10 years ago the stage was installed, and the displaying of student photography began within the past five years.

"The more the students have told us about the things they'd like to have, the more we've been able to do it," Barnes said. "It just keeps self generating ... We don't change just for change's sake, we change to make things better for students."

One reason Barnes feels TDU is so popular is that it's an environment all members of JMU visit: students, professors and faculty members alike.

Students like Simon Watrous, a junior public policy and administration major, shares a similar mindset. Watrous said he visits the spot nearly every day.

"If you're grabbing food and need somewhere to eat it's great, if you're meeting people it's a good meeting spot," Watrous said. "You can get work done, but also if you want to see people, you can see people."

Senior marketing major Annie Huvane is a staff member at the Madison Union information desk and at TDU, and is also a fan of the environment TDU has to offer.

"It's probably like the most seating on campus in one place, so it's really good for conversations," Huvane said. "And Auntie Anne's helps."

With everything TDU has seen in the past 20 years, only time will tell what's to come.

"The question I get more often than any is, 'Where are you going to build the next one? How can you make this one bigger?'" Barnes said. "It's a big success for us and we're really proud of TDU."

CONTACT Richie Bozek at breezesports@gmail.com.

HISTORY | Quad excavation revealed 'birthday cake' of soil layers



COURTESY OF MARGARET MULROONEY

When construction first began on the Quad, the ground was so hilly that students could only cross it via wooden boardwalks. JMU's second president, Samuel Duke, first pursued the idea to level the terrain.

from page 3

perspective and refers to the idea that the South was destined to lose from the beginning, according to Encyclopedia Virginia.

Blanton used the Quad as an archaeological site in 2013, and found artifacts of its long history.

"The soil looked like a birthday cake with a lot of layers, each layer representing a chapter in JMU's history, how they shaped the landscape into what it is today," Blanton said.

Courtney Carullo, a senior history major, was a part of Blanton's historical anthropology class where the students dug holes around the Quad, the railroad tracks and behind Moody Hall.

"We dug around and of course there were a lot of rocks, but we found artifacts like dishes and silverware," Carullo said. "Evidence of the Newmans' life."

According to Mulrooney, the Quad has always been a communal space where students go to talk, soak up the sun and build community.

"Up until the '60s, there were May Day celebrations along the Quad, which was an important Pagan holiday in Europe," Mulrooney said. "The Quad also hosted graduation ceremonies for the whole school."

Lindsey Wood, a current history graduate student and a 2013 undergraduate alumna, also touched on the Quad's popularity.

"The Quad is so aesthetically pleasing, it's great to just sit out there on a beautiful day," Wood said. "It's a classic part of JMU, and of course there's the senior tradition to steal Quad bricks to always have a piece of it"

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One for the books

History professor voted best at JMU for his dedication to teaching and mentoring students

By **ELAINA TAYLOR**
contributing writer

Meet “Best Professor” Steven Guerrier, a JMU history instructor who left a teaching position at Virginia Military Institute to join JMU’s ranks in 1988.

“Students always rave about him as a professor,” history Department Head Gabrielle Lanier said. “I’ve worked with him since 1988, and he’s had a real impact on a lot of students over the years; students have remained in touch with him years later.”

Another history department colleague, Raymond Hyser, said he isn’t surprised by the students’ appreciation for Guerrier, adding that he believes it’s deserved.

“He has well-organized lectures, rich in detail and interpretation,” Hyser said. “He’s a gifted teacher not only in the classroom, but ... also as a mentor one-on-one for students’ senior honors and master’s theses.”

Although colleagues say the recognition of “best professor” is deserved, Guerrier remains humble.

“We’ve got dozens of ‘best’ professors even within the history department, and how many more do you suppose on this campus?” Guerrier said.

Guerrier believes that JMU places emphasis and importance on good teaching and maintaining high standards.

“One of the great things about this place is that there is an emphasis on teaching and the classroom and it’s higher here than any other place I know of,” Guerrier said.

For Guerrier, the recognition is significant because it comes from the students. But, teaching wasn’t Guerrier’s first inclination. “Frankly, [the idea of teaching] scared the hell out of me,” Guerrier said. His true interest was in research, and he saw teaching as the career path he’d have to take in order to pursue his passion. “But then I started doing it and it just flipped entirely. I found that I really liked it.”

Coming of age during the Vietnam War, Guerrier was intensely curious about U.S. foreign relations, and went on to double major in history and political science at Wayne State University in Detroit, also tacking on minors in Russian, anthropology and classical studies. He remembers taking a U.S. diplomatic history class with one of his favorite professors of all time, Melvin Small, as the war was drawing to a close, and was curious as to what would



DANIEL STEIN / THE BREEZE

Steven Guerrier has been teaching history at JMU for 28 years. Guerrier views teaching history as a form of storytelling and attempts to interpret and argue for the various motivations of history makers.

come next.

This in turn sparked Guerrier’s interest in U.S. military history, since he believes that ever since World War II, U.S. foreign policy is often militarized to a degree.

Guerrier went on to Michigan State University, where he earned his master’s degree in history and his doctorate degree in U.S. diplomatic history, specializing in the Cold War.

History continues to excite Guerrier, in part because there is always so much to be discovered.

“The way the United States and most Western powers deal with their secrets, there is some stuff that will never be declassified,” Guerrier

said. “But, overwhelmingly, you reach some threshold of 30, 40, 50 years, almost everything comes out.”

He also believes historical background or precedent can be useful to know, and is always relevant and applicable to contemporary periods.

“There’s a great line, ‘History doesn’t repeat itself, but it rhymes,’” he said, adding that trends will repeat even if exact circumstances don’t. His prime example is the rising tension between Russia and the U.S. since the 2014 invasion of Ukraine, prompting a resurgence of what feels like the Cold War era.

Part of what Guerrier enjoys as a teacher is

changing his students’ perspectives on the world.

“I like telling the stories in ways they haven’t heard before, with new twists on it, something that goes into a little more depth than what they may have had before,” Guerrier said.

As a lecturer, Guerrier takes on the role of storyteller.

“You’ve got to go into some depth of the story or you lose the nuance that makes it interesting,” Guerrier said. “And if you can’t get people interested in the presentation, they’re not going to absorb the material.”

Guerrier aims to cover not just what happened, but why it happened and the significance. He tries to interpret and argue for what motivated these history makers to do what they did, and what it means.

Guerrier also tries to present the information in ways students haven’t heard before. For example, in a recent class discussion, Guerrier made an argument about how powerful the central government should be, which he said is probably the most consistent theme in debate over the course of American history.

“All of American politics is about, one way or another, finding that balance,” Guerrier said.

From the looks on the students’ faces, they hadn’t thought of it that way before, and it’s moments like that sustain him as a teacher.

Many students appreciate Guerrier’s attempts to keep his lectures interesting.

“I really enjoyed his class ... the readings, the discussions,” Mike St. Jacques, a graduate student in history, said. “Not to mention he’s probably the best straight lecturer in the history department.”

St. Jacques took Guerrier’s graduate seminar on the Cold War and remembers it being incredibly detailed and covering lots of background.

“It was like the Kelvin scale version of the Cold War; you started all the way at zero,” St. Jacques said.

Nils Martin, another graduate student in history, also acknowledges Guerrier’s clear understanding of the subject he teaches.

“He’s a wealth of knowledge,” Martin said. “He gets up there and is such a conversational lecturer, and tells such great stories and anecdotes.”

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